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MUST WAGES COME DOWN?

A most deadly weapon in the armoury of the politicians who defend the interests of the employing class is the assertion that wages must come down because the present rates of pay are "more than industry will bear." It is put forward by Liberals and Tories, and has been supported by the expert advisers called in to help the Labour Government. It is accepted by large numbers of workers, and is more than half-believed by the Labour leaders themselves. It is not true.

The Capitalist class are not poor, nor are they becoming poor. The powers of wealth production are not declining, but increasing. The Seventy-second Report of Inland-Revenue (Table 47) tells us that the gross income assessed to income tax (excluding weekly wage-earners) amounted, in the year ended March, 1929, to an estimated total of £2,765,000,000. That figure is the largest amount in any year since the War. It is £41 million more than the highest preceding year, and is £650 million more than the first complete year after the War (1919-1920). Sir Herbert Samuel, in a letter to *The Times*, published on December 1st, stated, on the authority of Professor A. L. Bowley, that in spite of the so-called depression the total national income in 1930 would probably be £100 millions more than the national income in 1924, the year when the last comprehensive calculation was made by Professor Bowley and Sir Josiah Stamp. This will put 1930 only slightly below 1928 and about on a level with 1927.

The vast surplus wealth of the rich minority, at a time when about two and a quarter million workers are jobless and dependent on unemployment pay or relief, is well illustrated by the huge sums of money seeking investment. The *Daily Ex-*

press on December 11th drew attention to the fact that "bank deposits are very considerably higher than they were this time a year ago. People are hoarding instead of investing. Money is so cheap as to be almost unlendable." The *Financial Times* on November 10th gave details of one recent loan after another which had been heavily over-subscribed. A typical example is the London Electric Railway issue. The company wanted to raise about £3,500,000. They received offers totalling nearly £140 millions, or forty times as much as they wanted. It is true that some applicants would apply for more than they expected to receive, but they would do this only because they were aware of the superabundance of money seeking investment. This is nowhere denied. Mr. Snowden, in the House of Commons on October 30th, stated categorically, in reply to a question, "There is no shortage of credit." The *Evening Standard's* City Editor (November 25th) estimated that about £1,000 millions had been offered for investment in response to invitations to invest less than a quarter of that amount. This had all happened in the first ten months of 1930, the year of "depression." In Australia, another "depressed" country, a £28 million Government loan in December was promptly over-subscribed.

What, then, is this "trade depression"? It is a condition which arises normally and inevitably out of Capitalism. It is a crisis of over-production. Millions of the world's workers are suffering want because the world is glutted with goods which no one will buy. In spite of what was described by the *Observer* on June 22nd as "frantic efforts to limit production," the competing combines which struggle for control of production are faced with burst-

ing grain elevators, overflowing oil tanks, over-stocked warehouses, and shops filled with unsaleable goods. Ships lie idle, farmers are burning wheat in Manitoba, and South America is convulsed with political upheavals owing to the suffering caused by vast quantities of unsaleable coffee, grain, nitrates, etc.

The owners of industry have allowed the workers they employ to produce more food, more fuel, more ships, more raw material, more machinery and more of everything than they can sell. Not that there are no people in need—far from it. Three-quarters of the population have never known the pleasure of satisfying their modest desires to the full. It has been estimated by American Trade Unions that this winter will see one-sixth of the men, women and children of the U.S.A. on the verge of starvation. Contrast that with the American Standard Oil Companies' estimated record profit in 1930 of £57 millions.

Those who are in need lack money to buy. Those who have surplus money have no more needs left unsatisfied. That is the key to the depression. That is why prices are forced down and workers are thrown out of work by the hundred thousand. There they will stay until the accumulations of goods are slowly disposed of. Then the anarchic system of producing faster than the market can absorb will begin again.

Lower wages will not remedy this evil. Lower wages aggravate it. With less money to spend, the working class buy less than before of the goods offered for sale. The employers increase their incomes as a result of the reduced wages bill, but much of the increase merely goes to swell the fund of money which is surplus to their requirements. They seek to invest it, but find fields for investment limited. Nobody will extend plant and factories at a time when the existing ones are shut down because the owners cannot find buyers for their goods.

Since 1921 the total annual wages of the workers have been reduced by over £550 million. That has not solved the unemployment problem. It has merely served to make the rich richer than before.

There is, then, no economic necessity for lower wages, but is it possible in the existing situation for the workers to resist demands made by the employers for wage reductions?

Let us first make clear what wages are. The owners of the means of production (the land, factories, and so on) are the owners of all the wealth which the workers produce. They give to the workers wages which cover their cost of living. Nevertheless, there is, for most workers, a margin between the standard of living and the cost of providing the bare physical necessities of life. The employers seek constantly to reduce the level of wages in keeping with any fall in the cost of living, and to press wages down still further towards the bare physical minimum. If there were no resistance, they would do this. The workers' economic organisations, their Unions, can be centres of resistance. They may, as happened in Germany only a month or two ago, play the humiliating role of inviting wage reductions. On the other hand, they may put up a stiff resistance. If they do this, the employers will pause and count the cost before embarking on an attempt to force acceptance of their terms. It is true that the employers have behind them their wealth and the forces of the State to starve the workers into submission, but it is also true under certain conditions that they will hesitate to launch out on this costly and provocative course. It is admitted that increases of wages give the employers added inducement to employ more labour-saving machinery. But here, again, it is worth noticing that the vast accumulations of capital which to-day are sunk in plant and machinery make a factory re-organisation scheme more expensive than it was when the amounts of capital so invested were less.

The first essential is that the workers should clear their minds of the employers' propaganda which harps continually on the so-called depression. The Capitalist class as a whole are not depressed. They are richer than they have ever been.

Ever since 1920 we have had it drummed into our ears that industry is depressed. But the *Economist* newspaper's index of the rate of dividend on ordinary shares shows a remarkable stability at about 10 per cent. The average rate in 1919 was 10.7 per cent. Since then it has never risen above 11.1 per cent. or fallen below 8.4 per cent. In 1929 it was 10.5 per cent., in spite of falling prices. We have been solemnly warned that the unfortunate Capitalists were living on their capital. But

Sir Josiah Stamp (*Times*, November 20th, 1930) estimates the total national wealth in 1928 as being over £18,000 millions, as compared with only £14,310 millions in 1914. He has deducted from his 1928 figure the National Debt of £6,400 millions, the gross total being £24,445 millions.

Again, the workers must not be deceived by the specious argument that if they refuse to accept lower wages they will lose their employment altogether. If the Capitalist class have need to preserve any industry or branch of industry which is in financial difficulties, they will themselves find excuses for protecting it with tariffs or for giving it subsidies. They will keep it on its feet, whatever the level of wages. Thus we see the Capitalist class prepared to give State grants to air service companies and (in Australia) to gold-mining companies. In 1926 we saw the Conservative Government heavily subsidise the mines. And we have seen the inland telegraphs maintained permanently at a big annual loss because the Capitalist class have need of that service. Millions of pounds were paid as subsidies to overseas cable companies.

On the other hand, if the Capitalist class have no need to maintain a particular branch of industry, they will let it close down in spite of lower wages. Where combination is far advanced, it is now quite common for the federated employers to buy out particular units simply in order to close them down. "National Shipbuilders' Security, Ltd.," is a company formed for the express purpose of buying and dismantling redundant shipyards on behalf of the shipbuilders in general.

The arguments referred to above are used by the employers to make their wage reduction policy easier of attainment. The arguments need only to be examined for their purpose to be understood.

But something more is required of the workers. Even the most effective action on the economic field, i.e., that action which is based on an appreciation of the common interests of the workers as a class, cannot solve the fundamental problem. Only Socialism can do that.

And if the workers would turn their attention to Socialism, the whole form of the struggle with the employing class would change. So far, despite heroic fights by Trade Unionists against wage reductions, the employing class have never had reason

to fear that the working class were turning away from their belief in the Capitalist system. But when a considerable body of workers learn the lesson that no reformist policy or party is of any use, and begin to understand and support the demand for Socialism, we can confidently anticipate a less aggressive and less cheese-paring attitude on the part of employers. They will, when that time comes, be anxious to surrender part of their wealth in the hope that by so doing they may stave off the day when they must yield it all. We shall then be well on the way to the acquisition by society of the means of wealth production now privately owned by a privileged class.

H.

THE WORKERS' SOCIALIST PARTY (U.S.A.).

Readers in the U.S.A. are invited to communicate with the Workers' Socialist Party of the United States, at 315, East 14th Street, New York City.

The Workers' Socialist Party are our agents in the U.S.A., and the "SOCIALIST STANDARD" is obtainable from them at the above address.

Sunday Evening Meetings. Head Office.

Date.	Subject.	Speaker.
January 4th	D. Goldberg.
'The New Year and the Working Class.'		
January 11th	W. McHaffie.
'Science and the Working Class.'		
January 18th	E. Willmott.
'Socialism and Trade Unionism.'		
January 25th	R. Ambridge.
'Poverty.'		

Meetings commence at 8 p.m. Non-members invited.
Questions and Discussion. Admission Free.

HOW TO GET TO HEAD OFFICE.

Great Dover Street is a turning out of Borough High Street, near Borough (Underground) Station. The station is on the line from Morden to Hamptead and Highgate, and lies between the Bank Station and Elephant and Castle.

CLASS AT HEAD OFFICE.

The following class is held at Head Office:

ECONOMICS. Wednesday evenings, 8 p.m.

The class is free and open to all.

EINSTEIN DISCUSSES SOCIALISM

Professor Einstein has submitted to be interviewed by the "New Leader." In their usual extravagance of style, they speak of him as "the maker of an universe"; quoting Bernard Shaw they say "he is one of the eight greatest men in the world, the men who were makers of universes." Is this the modern method of creating new gods? Are we to blame Einstein and the other seven for all the rottenness in the universe of to-day? After all language should express truth, and there is a wide difference between making a universe and explaining aspects of it.

On the other hand, Einstein cannot be held responsible for the pompous exaggeration of the "New Leader." Possibly he sees the fraudulent nature of their propaganda, but is unwilling to commit himself to a scientifically reasoned socialism which would shock a ruling class that is daily according him high honours. Charles Darwin found himself similarly placed when his biological theory of evolution made the Adam and Eve story look silly. His concern was the acquirement of knowledge for the human race, and when freethinkers and Christians engaged in an embittered controversy, he covered himself by remarking that the Christian could accept the new explanation of the world and still keep his god, who breathed into a dead world the spirit of evolution that works without further interference on his part.

The parallel between Einstein and Darwin is not quite perfect. In Darwin's day practically the whole ruling-class was ranged on the side of the clergy and against the freethinkers. If Darwin had expressed sympathy with their outlook he would have been socially ostracised. To-day a party that sometimes calls itself socialist is actually governing the country and the "New Leader" is a weekly organ of the party whose members are carrying on the business of government in the interest of the ruling-class. Consequently Professor Einstein has nothing to fear as a result of association with the Labour Party.

No one, to-day, is afraid to call himself a socialist, because in the minds of most people the name is associated with a government that is, in the capitalist sense, just as respectable, orthodox and even conservative as any of its predecessors.

Consequently there is nothing remarkable in the fact that Einstein finds himself politically in agreement with the Labour Party and the "New Leader," for the Labour Party is not antagonistic to the capitalist system of society.

Professor Einstein agreed to answer certain questions put by a representative of the "New Leader." The first question was:

"What in your view is likely to be the influence of scientific discovery on social progress?"

His answer was ("New Leader" 7th Nov.):

"The effect of the progress of science is to liberate human beings from sheer muscular effort and *thus to render possible the participation of everyone in the social and intellectual life of the human race.*" (Our italics.)

Note the cautious phrasing of the portion in italics. Participation is rendered possible, but no suggestion of its becoming a certainty. He did not even tell the "New Leader" that it rests with the working-class to make it a certainty.

The next question, "as to whether or not the influence of scientific discovery would give capitalism a new era of greater stability and power," failed to draw the Professor, who dexterously intimated "that it was not sufficiently clear what conception of capitalism was in the mind of the questioner."

Evidently the Professor is aware of the confusion that is characteristic of the "New Leader" when it attempts to explain social systems, either present or future. His refusal to be drawn compelled the "New Leader" to put an alternative question, which reads:

"Whether or not the enormous extension of human power over natural resources is likely to compel the abandonment of concentrated private ownership and control of industrial processes and their substitution by forms of communal ownership and control?"

Einstein's reply was:

"Science has furnished us with little information on this subject. The experience of history is, however, to the effect that an ever-increasing number of economic organisations have become public property or have been placed under public control. *The concentration of large-scale industry which is an economic necessity brings about the imposition of public control.*"

The "New Leader" heralds this reply as "support for the socialist case for public control of industry," a glaring example of their confusion over the term socialism. Public control means nationalisation, or collective control by the capitalist class, as we see it in the Post Office. The case for socialism is the case for a system of society where all the means of wealth-production and distribution are owned by the people and controlled democratically by them for their mutual benefit.

The two things socialism and nationalisation are totally different, in complete opposition to each other. To write, therefore, of the socialist case for public control, is like talking of the socialist case for capitalism, which would be just as nonsensical as the administration of capitalist affairs by a socialist government.

It will be seen that Einstein in his reply to the last question confined himself to the economic side of it; concentration is an economic necessity which brings about public control, i.e., a further economic necessity. Capitalism may develop one economic necessity after another indefinitely, but it can never develop socialism which implies a political revolution.

Socialism is unthinkable to the capitalist class, something utterly impracticable and unjustifiable. To a class that has been in possession for generations, the idea of common ownership is abhorrent. To-day they will not even admit the possibility of it. When they are forced to recognise it as an alternative to their own system, they will use all the forces at their disposal to hinder its advance.

Politicians and business men at present prefer, or pretend, to believe with the Labour Party, that socialism means the same thing as nationalisation. But nationalisation is a purely capitalist reform. Its chief object is to equalise the conditions of exploitation for capitalist competitors. Moreover, nationalisation has always been the work of capitalist statesmen and groups. It was not through the demands of the working-class that railways were nationalised in Germany, or the telegraphs and telephones in England, or, in fact, any of the services or industries that are common all over the capitalist world.

The workers gain nothing by nationalisation. Their status is unchanged. The capitalists still control the means of wealth

production and guarantee the profits to themselves. They still compel the workers to sell their energy for wages that barely cover the cost of living.

Professor Einstein, in his replies to the "New Leader," indicated that the tendency was for an ever-increasing number of economic organisations, or industries, to become state controlled. What of it? It does not need to be one of the world's greatest eight to see actual events or tendencies. Einstein's reputation is very largely built up on the discovery of a theory which neither he nor anyone else has been able to make intelligible to the average man. "The progress of science," he says, "liberates human beings from sheer muscular effort." True, but it is liberation from the frying-pan of bewildering competition and endless toil into the flames of a burning desire for a normal life. With the progress of such liberation, instead of "the participation of everyone in the social and intellectual life of the human race," the numbers tend to become restricted to the parasite class and a group of professional scientists, politicians and other time-servers.

The economic platitudes that Einstein voiced can be left to work themselves out, with or without help from the capitalist class, whom alone they concern. Concentration of industry, huge industrial corporations and nationalisation, while they affect the worker, often adversely, are not his concern. He cannot under capitalism retard or hasten movements that are purely economic. They result from the normal development of the capitalist system.

We say the worker who sells his labour-power continuously is fortunate. He is fortunate compared with the unemployed man. But does the fact of his holding a job make it possible for him to "participate in the social and intellectual life of the human race"? Not much! He may occasionally wonder what it is like to be free from continuous toil, to have all his wants satisfied and to have the time and means to indulge in the every-day pastimes of the well-to-do. But the sordid nature of his contact with society lies always subconsciously at the back of his mind. Condemned to sell his energy in competition with his fellow workers, seeing himself always as something cheap, one out of millions who are thankful for half a loaf. Society can do without him, there are

plenty to take his place. A whim of the overseer, a slump in the market, or a change in the habits of his fellow-workers may turn him into a waster. Capitalist production is carried on for profit, and in the process capitalists care less for the millions of human wasters thrown aside than for the obsolete machinery they are forced to scrap.

Einstein may be the greatest of living scientists. The problem before the working-class may be child's play to him, but he dare not reason out the solution for them. What is more, the "New Leader" did not ask him to do so.

F. F.

THE I.L.P. AND THE GERMAN INDEPENDENT SOCIALIST PARTY.

[The following letter was forwarded to *Freiheit*, organ of the German Independent Socialist Party, in order to remove some common, but quite erroneous, notions about the I.L.P.]

24 November, 1930.

To the Editor, *Freiheit*.
Chaussee-strasse, 121,
Berlin, N.4.

Comrade,—In the issue of *Freiheit* dated 23 November you publish an article under the title, "*Die neue Initiative für eine Internationale*." In the article there is a statement that the British Independent Labour Party (I.L.P.) is not reformist in its outlook. Since that statement can only have been made without full knowledge of the aims and activities of the I.L.P., we would like to place the following facts before you.

The I.L.P. is not a Socialist party, but a party which aims merely at nationalisation or State Capitalism.

In spite of its name, it is not an independent party at all. It is affiliated with the British Labour Party, and accepts in all essentials the reformist programme and policy of the Labour Party.

Two hundred of the Labour Party Members of Parliament (about 70 per cent. of the total) are also members of the I.L.P. Therefore the I.L.P. shares responsibility for every action of the so-called "Labour" Government.

Not a single one of the I.L.P. members who are in Parliament was elected as a

Socialist, or even as an I.L.P. candidate. Every one of them was elected as an official candidate of the Labour Party, and fought his election on the reformist programme of the Labour Party. The Labour Party does not permit its candidates to come before the electors as Socialists or as I.L.P. candidates. They are all compelled to stand as Labour Party candidates.

During the War the I.L.P. allowed its members in Parliament to vote war credits and to take office in the Conservative-Liberal-Labour Coalition Government. At the present time it allows its members in Parliament to vote credits for armaments, and to take office in the Labour Cabinet.

The I.L.P. permits prominent members to advocate an alliance with the Liberal Party.

While a section of the I.L.P. criticizes the actions of the Labour Government, and the Chairman of the I.L.P. (Mr. Maxton) has declared, in speech and in writing, over a period of years, that the programme of the Labour Party is merely a programme of Liberal reforms and a programme of Capitalism, yet at each ensuing election the I.L.P. and Mr. Maxton tell the workers to vote that Capitalist party into power.

While some members of the I.L.P. claim, on occasion, that they are Marxists, the I.L.P., as a party, repudiates Marxism and the whole conception of the class struggle.

We consider it desirable that you should be made acquainted with these facts.

THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE,
The Socialist Party of Great Britain.

BERMONDSEY.

MEETINGS

will be held at

BERMONDSEY PUBLIC LIBRARY
(Small Hall),

SPA ROAD, BERMONDSEY,
at 8 p.m. on

MONDAY, JANUARY 12th.

Speaker: A. Kohn.

Subject:

'Life and Labour in the U.S.A.'

MONDAY, JANUARY 26th.

Speaker: Gilmae.

Subject:

'Machinery and Wages.'

Doors open 7.30 p.m. Admission free.
Non-members invited. Questions and Discussion.

THE TYNESIDE COMMUNIST COLLAPSE.

It is common knowledge that the membership of the Communist Party in this country has for a long time been on the downward grade. At one time it could boast of a membership of over ten thousand, but to-day its enrolled adherents number only two or three thousand at most. One of the distinguishing features of this self-styled "revolutionary" party is the violent revolutions which have occurred in both its membership and its policy.

The large industrial area of the North-East, known as Tyneside, has experienced a deluge of Communist activity second to none in the whole country. Huge quantities of literature, dozens of full-time organisers, and demonstrations by the score have been utilised in an endeavour to create on Tyneside what the Communists term a "revolutionary mass movement."

According to Communist reasoning, the workers of this country are "waiting for a lead." This is a phrase which they have reiterated again and again.

After ten years of feverish and often farcical activity, they have succeeded only in leading their dupes either to gaol, victimisation or despair. The collapse of their organisation on Tyneside, where they were relatively strong, marks another stage in the general disintegration which has been sapping their strength for a considerable period.

This latest disaster is the expulsion of all but three members of the Newcastle City local, simultaneously with wholesale defections from the other locals in Tyneside.

The bitter disappointment which has been engendered by the utter failure of the Communists to produce the mass movement which they have aspired to lead, and for which they alternatively supported and then opposed the Labour Party; fraternised with the leaders of the T.U.C. and then denounced them in the strongest terms; allied themselves with Cook and Maxton, whom they now brand as tricksters and betrayers, is a complete vindication of the position taken up by the Socialist Party of Great Britain. That position, in brief, is that the workers can only advance towards Socialism in the light of Socialist knowledge.

A class-conscious Socialist working class

presupposes the acceptance and understanding of the essentials of Socialist principles by a majority of the exploited class.

To the Communist, this is a process either impossible of achievement or too long to work for. A "proletarian dictatorship"—whatever that may mean—must be set up; and, in pursuance of this somewhat hazy objective, the most startling and bewildering political somersaults have occurred.

Even in the initial task of attracting a considerable amount of support from a minority of the workers in this mad and dangerous undertaking, the Communists have signally and miserably failed.

It is hardly necessary to point out now to the Tyneside ex-Communists that their mistaken policy resulting from the non-acceptance of sound Socialist principles, the policy of political shuffling, compromise and expediency, leads not to Socialism, but to the shambles.

The realisation of the futility and incorrectness of Communist methods is being forced upon them more and more.

In a debate with the writer, held in Newcastle some months ago, the Communist Party representative, T. Aisbitt, was compelled to defend and endeavour to explain the tortuous path of Communist policy. It is now admitted that it was known all along that this policy was dangerous and unsound. The truth, evidently, had to be hidden because "loyalty" to the party demanded it!

The *Daily Worker*, once held up as the organ of the "militant workers," is now frankly described as the organ of the Communist Bureaucracy.

It is asserted that corruption and autocracy are rife amongst the officials, who resist any attempt to cleanse the organisation of these evils.

The path to Socialism is clear. It entails the acceptance of the principles and policy of the S.P.G.B. as laid down clearly and simply in the Declaration of Principles of the Party.

The Tyneside Secessionists would do well to study these principles attentively. They will then recognise that the Socialist Party is the only party worthy of the workers' support.

EDMUND HOWARTH.

OFFICIAL NOTICE.

All communications for the Executive Committee, Subscriptions for the SOCIALIST STANDARD, Articles, and Correspondence submitted for insertion therein, should be addressed—The Socialist Party of Great Britain, 42, Great Dover Street, London, S.E.1, to whom Money Orders should be made payable.

The meetings of the Executive Committee are held at the Head Office, every Tuesday, at 7.30 p.m.

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JANUARY,



1931

THE LABOUR PARTY DROPS ITS PROGRAMME.

A very significant declaration has been made by Mr. Ramsay MacDonald in the House of Commons. He was asked by Mr. Kirkwood whether the Labour Government are prepared to introduce legislation for the purpose of preventing reductions in wages. The Prime Minister replied:—

Wages, either real or nominal, cannot be fixed by legislation for the wage-earners generally. The Government's policy is to maintain standards of living and secure as equitable a distribution of wealth as is possible. (Hansard, 26 November, 1930.)

This declaration of policy—or lack of policy—is tantamount to the abandonment of the whole Labour Party programme so painstakingly built up by the efforts of its members during the past thirty years. The Labour Party in office at a stroke sends tumbling down the castle of cards that the Labour Party in opposition had set up. If wages cannot be kept up by legislation, for what purpose did the Labour Party take office? And for what purpose, other than their salaries and to qualify for Cabinet Ministers' pensions, do they remain there? How does the Government propose to "maintain standards of living"? Mr. MacDonald does not say. He does not

know. His Cabinet have been in office since June, 1929, and during that year and a half, standards have not been kept up. According to the records of the Ministry of Labour, published monthly in the *Labour Gazette*, nearly two million workers have had their wages reduced between June, 1929, and October, 1930 (the last published figures). The number who have had increases is not one-tenth as large. The net decrease in wages, after deducting the increases, is equivalent to more than £6 million a year; to which must be added the decreases in pay of clerical workers, agricultural workers, shop assistants, Civil Servants, and others not included in the Ministry's figures.

To that must be added, again, the far greater losses to the workers caused by the growing volume of unemployment under the Labour Government. On a most moderate estimate, the increase in unemployment has meant a loss in wages amounting to £100 million a year over and above the loss in wages which was going on before the Labour Ministry came in.

The Labour Party's own "Index of Real Wages," published monthly in the *Labour Bulletin*, shows the industrial workers to be 6 per cent. or 7 per cent. worse off now than they were when the Labour Government took office. The Index in question allows for the percentage of unemployment and also for the decline in prices, but takes no account of short-time working.

It may be said that the workers' losses are not the fault of the Labour Government; they have done their best. But that is only another way of saying that the Labour Party has not got any policy which will meet the situation in which the workers find themselves under Capitalism.

It is also urged in their defence that the Labour Government do not enjoy a Parliamentary majority. They have to depend on Liberal votes, and therefore the Labour policy cannot be applied. But taking office as a minority is itself part of the Labour policy. They are there by the unanimous vote of the Parliamentary Labour Party (including Maxton and his group), taken at the first meeting after the General Election.

From the right wing to the most left of the several fragments into which the I.L.P. is now split, the Labour policy is the one of trying to improve the workers' standard

of living by an accumulation of reforms. But of what use are reforms if every reform is accompanied or followed by a fall in wages? Of what use is a reformist political party which cannot use its political power for the purpose of preventing reductions in wages? Mr. MacDonald's reply to Mr. Kirkwood is an admission of abject failure; an intimation to Trade Unionists that they have supported the Labour Party to no purpose; a curt reminder that they must fight their own battles without help from those whom they have lifted into eminence.

In practice they have not been helped, but hindered. The wages of large bodies of workers in the woollen and cotton industries, in agriculture, and in the Civil Service, have been reduced by the Government itself or by bodies appointed by the Government.

The Government's failure is fast exposing the hollowness of the case put forward by all the parties which believe in reforming Capitalism. They promised that a period of "practical work" performed by a Labour Government would convert the workers to Socialism. Experience of Labour Government, if we may judge by the elections, is fast converting the Labour supporters back to Liberalism and Toryism.

A QUESTION TO NON-MEMBERS.

We are puzzled by the existence of a large body of old readers and sympathisers who remain non-members. There must be at least two or three thousand of our regular readers who are thoroughly acquainted with our case and more or less in sympathy with the Socialist Party. We ask those who are in that position if they will write to tell us why they refrain from taking the logical next step of becoming members. We would also like to hear from those who, knowing our case, oppose it; and from those who are still in doubt about some point or other. We do not, as a rule, answer anonymous letters, but if some readers would prefer not to give their name when explaining their reasons for remaining outside the Party or for opposing our cause, we would like to hear from them nevertheless. The names of correspondents will not be published when their letters are answered, unless they desire it.

IS A GOLD SHORTAGE THE CAUSE OF UNEMPLOYMENT?

Gold is causing considerable disturbance in the minds of many people just now. The plea is being put forward that the present abnormal amount of unemployment is due to a fall in prices caused by a shortage of gold.

This supposed shortage of gold is attributed to two causes: (1) Decrease in the production of gold, and (2) Unequal distribution of gold available.

The way this alleged shortage of gold is supposed to affect prices is by causing a shortage in the total amount of money available to buy goods.

The first point to meet, then, is the question, "Is there a shortage of gold?" and the answer is, "Most emphatically, no!"

The total world production of gold has gone up from 69 million pounds in 1920 to 83½ million pounds in 1929 (see *Economist*, February 15th, 1930). This represents an increase of over 20 per cent. in ten years. The Transvaal, which produces 53 per cent. of world's total, has increased its production by 10 million pounds since 1920, and, according to *The Times* of December 11th, its production for the eleven months of 1930 is well up over 1929 for the same period.

In the meantime new rich finds of gold have been reported in Australia and Venezuela, and new depths and cheaper working in South Africa.

The Gold Delegation of the League of Nations have made a comprehensive survey of past, present and future production of gold, and have published an interim report on the matter in September, 1930. The conclusion they have come to is that, leaving out of account new finds of gold and improved technical methods, there will be no inadequacy in the supply of gold for at least another ten to fifteen years. On page 75 of their report, Cassel, one of its members, points out that:—

The net result of the war on the world's monetary system is an extraordinary reduction in the monetary demand for gold, chiefly caused by an almost complete cessation of the use of circulating gold coins. This reduction in the demand for gold has resulted in a fall in the value of the metal and a rise in the general level of commodity prices to about 150, as compared with 100 before the war.

The City Editor of the *Evening Standard*, referring to the position in England, makes

the following remarks in the issue of November 21st last:—

For the creation of more credit we have now a substantial basis. A year ago the gold held by the Bank of England amounted to 133 million pounds. To-day we have 159 million pounds.

At present the gold is not being fully used. Inactive Bank of England notes total £64,172,894 against £37,016,595 a year ago. These figures show that the increase of 26 million pounds in our gold has not yet got into active circulation. It is, so to speak, stored up in the reserve.

In other words, we have now a reserve army of credit.

In the *Evening Standard* for December 10th the City Editor writes as follows:—

The appreciation in the price of gold has been a boon to gold mines containing only low-grade ore. It has made it possible to work them at a profit, and so has given increased employment to those engaged in the industry; has put money into the pockets of shareholders, and has increased the world's supplies of gold at a time when such increase is most welcome.

A shortage of gold, then, does not exist and, consequently, the present industrial depression cannot be attributed to this cause.

The idea that an unequal distribution of gold is at the root of the trouble is based on the same misconception as the idea that there is a shortage of gold.

The view held is generally known as the "quantity theory of money," and is defined by one of its principal exponents, Sir David Barbour, as follows:—

Other things being equal the level of prices is proportionate to the quantity of money. (Influence of gold supply on Prices and Profits, p. 47.)

Under modern conditions, the tendency is for money to change hands more rapidly than before, the resulting influence enabling exchanges to be effected with a less quantity of money, and thus acting in the direction of raising prices. (Ibid, p. 52.)

It is not necessary here to go into the question of the validity of the quantity theory. It is sufficient to point out that this theory cannot account for the fundamental differences in prices (for instance, between corn, oil, and diamonds).

However, let us examine the question on the ground of the quantity theory—that there is not enough gold for currency purposes owing to the fact that America and France are cornering such a large amount of the world's supply.

If this view be accepted, then America and France should be flourishing. In fact, however, the depression in America is even more marked than here and they are anticipating an unemployed army of about seven

millions this winter. In France the clouds are beginning to gather; unemployment is growing and the first fruits of the crisis are already causing considerable disturbance among politicians, as is shown by their efforts at Cabinet building.

In England an examination of the Bank return for the past few months entirely disposes of any idea that there is a shortage of currency. All through October and November there has been over sixty millions of unused currency notes lying in the banking department of the Bank of England. The Bank Return for December 17th shows that even at this time of the year, when there is an abnormal call on currency for Christmas buying, there is still forty-five and a half millions of currency notes lying idle in the banking department.

If it be urged that the alleged shortage does not show itself in currency, but in credit, and thereby lessens the amount available for investment, then it is sufficient to point out that there is a vast amount of money awaiting investment which cannot find an opening, as witness the share issues that are over-subscribed to the amount of millions of pounds in a few hours. This matter is dealt with elsewhere in this issue, and we will only add one or two further illustrations to those already given. In their "City Notes" *The Times* of November 24th makes the following observations:—

Some of our correspondents appear to think that the present trade depression, which is reflected in the fall of commodity prices, can only be cured by tackling what is described as the scarcity of gold and currency. There is, however, little evidence of either. America, for instance, has a huge gold stock and a credit-creating power far beyond anything she is making use of at present; the same might be said of France, and in this country the difficulty of banks is to find borrowers of the credit they are anxious to lend.

The *Financial Times* for November 10th, under the heading "Ample Funds for Investment," states:—

The fact that about 70 million pounds was subscribed for the issue of 5 million pounds S. Africa 4½ per cent. loan 1955-75, offered last week at 95½, serves to draw attention once again to the great volume of money available for investment, etc.

The *Evening Standard* of November 25th reports that Sir Andrew Duncan (head of the Central Electric Board) said: "The eager over-subscription of yesterday [£6 million C.E.B. stock] . . . is an addi-

tional proof of the plethora of money awaiting safe investment."

The evidence is therefore conclusive that there is a superabundance of gold, of currency, and of money awaiting investment. Why, then, the gold scare? There are two reasons; both of them old and both of them a consequence of the present system of Capitalist private ownership.

On the one hand, the Capitalists' professional spokesmen, at a loss to understand the source of the disorganisation and misery produced by the working out of the economic laws of Capitalism, clutch at any straw that gives the appearance of an explanation. On the other hand, any explanation that gives the Capitalists a weapon to force down wages is joyfully laid hold of and used with vigour.

The ignorance or knavery of the leaders of the Labour Party makes them willing tools in the hands of the Capitalists, as the following statement by Mr. William Graham, President of the Board of Trade, at Middlesbrough on December 7th, testifies:—

I fervently hope that American and British financial authorities will be able to arrive at an agreement in the use of gold reserves which will provide on a sound basis a great credit structure, and so minister to a common recovery. (*News-Chronicle*, 8 Dec., 1930.)

Thus do Labour leaders help the Capitalists to obscure the real cause of the present depression, which is, in fact, an accentuation of the over-production of goods. So fruitful are the means of production to-day, that the wholesale limitations imposed upon production have failed to prevent an over-stocked market. Capitalism is being choked by an enormous surplus of goods, and yet there are millions of workless and starving.

Increased production of gold or increase in money is, therefore, not the solution of the evils. The only solution is for the working class of the world to take over the means of production and carry on the work of society on a new foundation that will secure to each member of the community a sufficiency to satisfy his needs, and will ensure that a surplus of production will only mean less work for each.

GILMAC.

Contributions are earnestly invited to assist us with the expense of publishing more literature.

A WINTER'S TALE.

Well! well!!! well!!! Thank goodness, Christmas is over. Everybody has spent more than they should, everyone has bought presents for everyone else, and everyone is worse off except the children and the shopkeepers. The pantomimes are in full swing, and the opening of Parliament will add to their number. J. H. Thomas is ordering a new dress suit—all British—to help the trade of the Empire, and Ramsay is engaged in converting two and a half miles of his dinner speeches into gramophone records. With machines erected at convenient intervals along our coast, it is thought they will be wonderfully efficacious in keeping the east wind off our unemployed. The Mace was found to have vanished during the Recess, but Mr. Beckett explained he had only borrowed it to stir his pudding and would replace it in time for the opening performance. The sensitive heart of Mr. Lansbury has been riven by the spectacle of the ducks on St. James's Park lake being divorced from their natural element by a thin sheet of ice. Ever practical, ever sympathetic, he has directed that holes shall be pierced at appropriate intervals in the ice, and that the pelicans shall be fitted with (British) skates. That is all the news that our ill-informed Parliamentary Correspondent can think of for the moment. But, looking over the outstanding events of 1930, he has reminded us that there was one item of world-shattering import overlooked by the regular Press. Future historians will record their gratitude to us for rescuing from undeserved oblivion the following moving story.

Let us tell the tale from the beginning. The Communist Party has been having a thin time. Apart from the general apathy due to the discovery of the fraudulence of the Labour Party, the C.P. suffers from private bogies of its own. Among them there is what is called the "right" danger. They seem to be a bit foggy upon the precise meaning of the term, due to the Communist Pope and Cardinals not having explained the danger to the faithful membership. The result was unfortunate. As J. T. Murphy explained in the *Communist Review* for last June:—

Because of a lack of understanding of the new methods of work and a desire to eradicate the

"right danger," there has been by many comrades, indeed, whole district party leaderships, a leap into "left" sectarianism, which has isolated the party more than ever from the workers. The independent leadership of the party has become in these districts the *isolated leadership*, dashing about with revolutionary sounding propositions, accompanied by the transformation of revolutionary terms which mean something, into revolutionary jargon, which drives the workers away from us.

This is very sad, not to say serious. In fact, Mr. Murphy says:—

In order that the seriousness of this situation can be realised . . . it is necessary to analyse some of these experiences which have led to serious struggles between the Political Bureau and the comrades concerned, though these comrades finally admitted their mistakes.

Some instances follow of the faithful Communists fighting the "right" danger by barging into "left sectarianism." All are pathetically amusing. We select the following for seasonable reading, and wish we could add a reliable description of the "serious struggle" referred to.

Attend, then! Turn the kids out of the armchair, draw up to the fire, and prepare to be thrilled by the ghostly tale of the

Battle of Burnley Barracks.

'Twas a wild night in March, and the early equinoctial hurricane moaned menacingly among the chimney stacks of Manchester. "Just the night for right-wing treachery," said Al Capone to his— But no, we've got the wrong extract. This is the one, from the *Communist Review*:—

In the preparations for March 6, the Manchester Working Bureau put forward, among other proposals, that a number of leading comrades should on March 6 lead a march of the workers on to Burnley Barracks, and call on the soldiers in uniform to demonstrate with the workers in the streets. Now, no member of our Party will question the desirability of propaganda amongst the troops. But when it is realised that in Burnley we had not a single Party cell in the mills, that the whole Party membership in Burnley did not muster a dozen members, that there had not been the slightest preparation for mass action of the workers, no preliminary work amongst the soldiers, indeed, that there are no Burnley barracks and no soldiers in Burnley, then the absolutely unreal and romantic line of approach by the Bureau can be seen at a glance. Once upon a time, there were barracks in Burnley, but so realistic was the approach of the Manchester leadership to Burnley, that they had not discovered that these barracks had long ago been transformed into slum property.

It is good to learn that, as a result of "serious struggles," these comrades finally

admitted their mistakes. Let us recollect that it is only as a consequence of similar serious struggles that Don Quixote is known and endeared to us. Perhaps the Manchester Working Bureau's claim to immortality is greater than his, for whilst the Don mistook real windmills for fictitious giants, they planned a spectacular march upon the non-existent. However, no need for depression. That will come soon enough when they hear of the death of Queen Anne.

W. T. H.

INDUSTRIAL UNIONISM.

In a recent issue we reviewed briefly an American pamphlet by a Mr. Clausen on "American Socialism—or Labour Unions versus Company Unions."

The author was formerly a member of the S.L.P. and held that De Leon's position had been dropped by the present S.L.P. We invited Mr. Clausen, as we have invited the S.L.P., to explain how an economic organisation can take and hold the means of production. Mr. Clausen sends us a letter of 19 foolscap pages, but he omits to deal with the question at issue. The god he worships—De Leon—could not show the power of the industrial union to take and hold, and so our pamphleteer avoids the main point. We have specifically challenged all supporters of direct action who claim to accept Marx to show where Marx supports their theory. Marx insisted that the workers must win political power and capture the State machine to obtain supremacy. Until Daniel De Leon flirted with industrial unionism he held that "none but the political weapon can dislodge the usurpers and enthrone the working class" (Two pages from Roman History, page 46).

Our critic tells us that the great combines of U.S.A. "dominate the political government by reason of commanding the economic conditions of the country." This is the very opposite of the facts. The property-owning class can only "command" the economic conditions by being in political control.

Their economic interests unite the capitalists into political parties to control the governing machine so that their economic interests can be defended. Hence the fierce struggle in the U.S.A. to win a majority of the working-class voters to maintain capitalist control. Even the political cor-

ruption proves to what lengths they will go to win control of the all-dominating political machine.

Mr. Clausen admits this when he says that "they (the capitalists) are combined through the political government in order to hold the proletariat in subjection."

In spite of this Mr. Clausen repeats as his argument De Leon's anarchistic utterance that the emancipation of the workers must be achieved by the workers "through an economic organisation of the working class without affiliation with any political party."

That is "direct action." And, like all anarchist policies, it ignores the enormous power of the State machine to suppress revolts. It ignores, too, the lack of resources of the workers when on strike, "locked out," or "locked in."

Industrial Unionism cannot establish Socialism, for it organises the workers by industry and divides the workers up into industrial sections, each concerned with its own industry. De Leon's claim that only a worker in an industry can represent the workers in that industry is a rejection of the class struggle and the common interests of the working class. The Socialist Party hold that the workers must first of all realise their common interests and unite into a class organisation as Socialists struggling for political supremacy. The forms of the workers' economic organisation under capitalism will reflect the growing class understanding and Socialist ideas of the workers. The notion that only a plumber can represent a plumber may be Syndicalism, but it has nothing in common with Socialism.

Mr. Clausen's lengthy attack on the S.L.P. for its recent gymnastics is composed almost entirely of material of very little interest to most readers of this journal.

C.

POPLAR.

A MEETING.

will be held on

SUNDAY, JANUARY 25th

at 8 p.m.

POPLAR TOWN HALL,

Speaker: — A. Kohn.

Subject:

'The Workers and their Idols.'

QUESTIONS AND DISCUSSION.

Admission Free.

Non-members invited.

THE FUTILITY OF COMPROMISE.

"Straws," we are told, "show which way the wind blows." The results of recent Parliamentary bye-elections and the municipal elections in November indicate a marked diminution in the number of enthusiastic supporters of the Labour Party. Already "the flowing tide" has commenced to ebb, and the prospect of the Labour leaders forming a "majority" Government fades rapidly away. Wherever one turns, one discovers disappointment in the minds of life-long workers for the Labour Party at the manifest failure of these leaders to make an impression upon the various evils of the worker's life. Past masters in the art of blowing radiant bubbles of Utopian promise, these successful climbers of the political ladder are helpless in the face of increasing unemployment and wage reductions.

The Conservatives are jubilant. Mr. Baldwin sees prospects of another lengthy term of office to commence in the not far distant future; but it is not, perhaps, that prospect which pleases him and his supporters most. He is a wealthy man, surrounded by wealthy men, to whom office is a secondary consideration. What is of first-class importance in their eyes is the stability of the social system which guarantees to them a livelihood of ease and luxury without the necessity of working. Throughout the length and breadth of the land, Conservatives (and, for that matter, Liberal) spokesmen are chanting of "the failure of Socialism." Their logic is as simple and convincing as their assumptions are spurious. "The Labour Party is a Socialist Party. The Labour Party has failed!" "Socialism has failed!" Thus runs their argument.

Of course, it is not their business to point out to the workers that the Capitalist system is still running, that the Labour Party has done nothing to interfere with it, that the Labour Party has not even shown any intention of interfering with it. The leaders of the Labour Party have pleaded that they are helpless before the operation of world causes on the one hand, and the absence of an "independent majority" on the other.

Capitalism, however, did not become a world system last year; it has been a world

system for generations. The evils of Capitalism, which the Labour leaders professed to be able to remedy, have been world-wide in the scope of their operation for an equal period. Are we to understand that these leaders were such simpletons that they have only just realised this? Or did it require the responsibilities of office—and the salaries—to awaken them?

As for an "independent majority," what is the difference between depending upon Liberal votes inside the House of Commons and depending upon Liberal votes outside in the constituencies? The Labour Party has from the time of its foundation depended upon Liberal votes. MacDonald, Snowden, Hardie, and others sat for years for double-membered constituencies with Liberals as their fellow M.P.'s, on the "one-and-one" principle. The I.L.P. made a speciality in its election campaigns of capturing the support of Liberal Trade Unionists by offering them a programme slightly more liberal than that of the official Liberals. This policy of compromise was styled "practical politics," and the present situation of the Labour leaders is no mere accident, but a logically inevitable result of their entire political career. Incidentally, these facts dispose of the puerile nonsense recently indulged in by the Communists, to the effect that "the Labour Party has ceased to be a Socialist Party." It never was a Socialist Party and none of its responsible representatives have ever claimed that the majority of its members and supporters were "Socialists," even in the false sense in which they frequently use the term. The Labour Party's election programmes have never contained any principle which made them fundamentally distinct from Liberal programmes, and the Labour Party has therefore in practice never been anything more than a substitute for the Liberal Party. It has taken over that party's role of trying to keep the workers quiet by promises of reforming Capitalism.

Some supporters of the Labour Party appear to consider that their leaders' failure is personal; that it is due to not having the right men in office. It is plain, however, to anyone understanding the above facts, that no shuffling of ministers in the Government can accomplish any vital change. Neither Mosley nor Maxton in the place of MacDonald could ignore the

Liberal vote in the Commons and the constituencies without undermining their whole position. Any attempt to interfere with the normal operations of Capitalism could only introduce chaos and intensify the very evils of which the workers complain, thus bewildering their supporters and producing an even more rapid reaction than that at present in progress.

Economic laws cannot be set at defiance by emotional orators, however sincere they may be. The only logical alternative to Capitalism to-day is Socialism, and as the majority of Labour Party supporters are not Socialists, they will not support any fundamental attack upon Capitalism.

The present leaders of the Labour Party are astute enough and experienced enough to realise this, and they possess sufficient control over the party's wire-pulling machinery to hold the "rebels" in effective check. The Liberals (and, if need be, the Conservatives) are quite ready to save MacDonald from any embarrassment at the hands of the Maxtonites, so long as MacDonald serves their turn. Indeed, it is difficult in the circumstances to take Maxton's threats of independent action seriously, and the fate of Bailie Irwin at Renfrew shows that numbers of erstwhile Labour supporters cannot do so.

Compromise appeals to two types of politician for what may appear to be two reasons, but which are, in reality, two aspects of the same reason. The place-hunter practises compromise because it is the quickest way to reach office. We do not deny the statesmanlike skill which MacDonald and Snowden have exhibited in rising to the two principal offices of State. On the other hand, compromise enmeshes the unstable sentimentalist, because otherwise he would feel lonely. He wants to be "with the masses," to do something for them! And seeing that he can only try to do as they wish (however ill-informed they may be at the moment), he eventually finds himself assisting the place-hunters into office; for the workers, in turn, can only act in accordance with their knowledge or their ignorance, as the case may be.

At present the majority of the workers lack the necessary knowledge to organise for Socialism. Only economic development coupled with intelligent propaganda can teach them. In the meantime, all the

efforts of calculating schemers and well-meaning blunderers can only bring them disappointment, disillusion and despair. The Socialist Party has said this for a quarter of a century, and it is prepared, if necessary, to go on repeating it for a similar period; but it looks as though we shall be saved the trouble. Day by day the truth of our contention is being vividly demonstrated. The bitter fruits of compromise are setting the workers' teeth on edge. The immediate result may, perhaps, be apathy and reaction on the political field, strikes and violence on the industrial field. The attempts of reformers to gloss over and patch up the class-struggle will be mocked by its virulent re-assertion.

For ourselves, however, not having based any hopes upon a cheap "Labour victory," we find no cause for despair in its coming debacle. The need for our existence becomes plainer than ever. Out of a realisation that compromise is futile will grow the conviction that the Socialist policy of unswerving determination to end Capitalism by attacking unceasingly its political props is the only fertile one.

We do not fear the temporary reaction. We shall not see some other Capitalist party solving the insoluble antagonisms within Capitalism. The failure of Labourism is but the echo of the failure of Conservatism and Liberalism. It is Capitalism which fails to permit the workers to enjoy the fruits of their labours. The interests of the workers demand a social change, a change from the private ownership of the means of living to the common ownership thereof. To that end we summon those workers whose scales are dropping from their eyes to organise for the capture of the powers of government in order to achieve their emancipation. E. B.

SHEFFIELD.

A MEETING

will be held on

Wednesday, January 28th, at 7.30 p.m.

TRADES HALL (ROOM 5).
CHARLES STREET, SHEFFIELD.

Speaker: E. Boden.

Subject:

'Socialism versus Capitalism.'

Non-members invited. Admission Free.
Questions and Discussion.

TO OUR READERS. PLEASE NOTE

The "Socialist Standard" can be obtained from the following Newsagents:—

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Hendersons, 66, Charing Cross Road, W.C.1.
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NOTICE TO CORRESPONDENTS.

Owing to pressure on space, a number of answers to correspondents have been crowded out of this issue.

S.P.G.B. PROPAGANDA MEETINGS

LONDON DISTRICT.

Sunday ... Liverpool St., Walworth Rd., 11.30 a.m.
Clapham Common, 3 p.m.
Tottenham, West Green Corner, 11.30 a.m.
Victoria Park, 11.45 a.m.
Cock Hotel, East Ham, 7.30 p.m.
Paddington, Prince of Wales, 7.30 p.m.

GLASGOW DISTRICT.

Sundays ... West Regent Street, 7.15 p.m.
Thursdays ... Raeberry Street, Maryhill, 8 p.m.

Fill in and post to 42 Great Dover Street, London, S.E. 1, and get this paper regularly.

Please send me the "Socialist Standard" for 12 months, for which I enclose 2/6.

Name

Address

Date

(If required only for 6 months, send 1/3).

BRANCH DIRECTORY.

- BATTERSEA.**—Sec., W. A. Devine, 2 Cupar-road, S.W.11. Branch meets Thursday, 8.30 p.m. at The Waiting Room, Latchmere Baths, entrance in Burns-road. Discussion second Thurs. in month.
- BECONTREE.**—Sec., Hy. Gratton, 4, Drummond Ave., Brooklands, Romford. Branch meets 1st and 3rd Wednesdays at 7.30, at above address.
- BIRMINGHAM.**—Sec., E. Jesper, 82, Rollason-rd., Erdington. Branch meets The Continental Cafe, Moor St., 1st and 3rd Sundays at 11 a.m.
- CENTRAL.**—Membership obtained only through the Ex. Committee. Applications to General Sec.
- EAST LONDON.**—Sec. W. Reynolds, 57, Weymouth Terrace, Hackney Kd. Branch meets every Friday at 8 p.m. at 141, Bow Road. Discussion after Branch business. Public invited.
- GLASGOW.**—Branch meets 2nd and 4th Fridays in month 8 p.m., at Herald League Book Stall, 89, Shuttle Street, Glasgow. A. Shaw, 118, Henderson Street, Glasgow, S.1.
- HACKNEY.**—Branch meets Arcadian Cafe, 42, Amherst Road, Hackney, 1st and 3rd Fridays in month, 8 p.m., Discussions 9.30. Communication to Sec. at 21 Bridge Street, Homerton, E. 9.
- HULL.**—Branch meets 1st and 3rd Wednesdays in month at 15, Grosvenor Street, Beverley Road. Communications to M. V. Coupland at above address.
- ISLINGTON.**—Branch meets Wednesdays, 8.30, at 144, Seven Sisters-rd., Holloway, N. Communications to that address.
- LEYTON.**—Branch meets 8 p.m., Trades and Labour Hall, Grove House, High-rd., second Mondays in month.
- MANCHESTER.**—Sec., W. Addison. — Branch meets 2nd and 4th Mondays in month at 8.15 p.m., at Room 2, 183 Oxford Road, All Saints.
- PADDINGTON.**—Branch meeting held on 2nd and 4th Fridays, 8 p.m., in room above the Co-operative Stores, 306, Kilburn Lane, W.9 (side door).
- SHEFFIELD.**—Branch meets 2nd and 4th Wednesdays 7.30 p.m., Room 5, Trades Hall, Charles Street. Public discussion after business. Secretary E. Boden, 74, Glenalmond Road.
- SOUTHEND-ON-SEA.**—Sec., J. Bird, 5, Wellington-avenue, Westcliffe-on-Sea.
- SOUTHWARK.**—Branch meets Fridays at 8 p.m., 42, Great Dover Street, S.E.1. Communications to Sec., at above address.
- TOOTING.**—Branch meets on the 2nd and 4th Thursday in the month at the Tooting Adult School, 971, Garratt Lane, S.W.17. Sec. (pro-tem), H. E. Hutchins, 174, Haydon's Road, South Wimbledon, S.W. 19.
- TOTTENHAM.**—Secretary, 18, Woodlands Park Rd., N.15. Branch meets 1st and 3rd Fridays each month, Room 2, Trades Hall, 7, Bruce Grove, Discussion after branch business. Public invited.
- WALTHAMSTOW.**—Sec. S. E. Williams, 64, Bloxhall-rd., Leyton, E.10. Branch meets at Workmen's Hall, High-st., every Monday.
- WATFORD.**—A. Lawson, Sec., 107, Kensington-avenue, Watford. Branch meets Mondays at 8.30 p.m. at Secretary's address.
- WEST HAM.**—Branch meets Thursdays at 8 p.m. at 167, Romford-rd., Stratford. Sec., P. Hallard, 22, Colegrave-rd., Stratford, E.

WOOD GREEN.—All communications to Sec., F. W. Godfrey, 71, Falkland Road, N. 8. Branch meets 2nd 2nd and 4th Wednesday in month at 8.30 p.m. at Stirling House, Stuart Crescent.

THE SOCIALIST PARTY OF GREAT BRITAIN.

OBJECT.—The establishment of a system of society based upon the common ownership and democratic control of the means and instruments for producing and distributing wealth by and in the interests of the whole community.

DECLARATION OF PRINCIPLES.

THE SOCIALIST PARTY of Great HOLDS— Britain

That society as at present constituted is based upon the ownership of the means of living (i.e., lands, factories, railways, etc.) by the capitalist or master class, and the consequent enslavement of the working class by whose labour alone wealth is produced.

That in society, therefore, there is an antagonism of interests, manifesting itself as a class struggle, between those who possess but do not produce and those who produce but do not possess.

That this antagonism can be abolished only by the emancipation of the working class from the domination of the master class, by the conversion into the common property of society of the means of production and distribution, and their democratic control by the whole people.

That as in the order of social evolution the working class is the last class to achieve its freedom, the emancipation of the working class will involve the emancipation of all mankind, without distinction of race or sex.

That this emancipation must be the work of the working class itself.

That as the machinery of government, including the armed forces of the nation, exists only to conserve the monopoly by the capitalist class of the wealth taken from the workers, the working class must organise consciously and politically for the conquest of the powers of government, national and local, in order that this machinery, including these forces, may be converted from an instrument of oppression into the agent of emancipation and the overthrow of privilege, aristocratic and plutocratic.

That as political parties are but the expression of class interests, and as the interest of the working class is diametrically opposed to the interests of all sections of the master class, the party seeking working-class emancipation must be hostile to every other party.

THE SOCIALIST PARTY of Great Britain, therefore, enters the field of political action determined to wage war against all other political parties, whether alleged labour or avowedly capitalist, and calls upon the members of the working class of this country to muster under its banner to the end that a speedy termination may be wrought to the system which deprives them of the fruits of their labour, and that poverty may give place to comfort, privilege to equality, and slavery to freedom.

Those agreeing with the above principles and desiring enrolment in the Party should apply for membership form to secretary of nearest branch or at Head Office.

THE Socialist Standard

The Official Organ of **THE SOCIALIST PARTY** of Great Britain.

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LONDON, FEBRUARY, 1931

[MONTHLY, TWOPENCE.]

WHY SOCIALISTS OPPOSE FAMILY ALLOWANCES.

The argument for family allowances is, at first sight, so plausible and attractive that those who oppose the whole scheme are liable to have their attitude misunderstood. Let there, then, be no misunderstanding about our attitude. We oppose family allowances because they would not be of any assistance to the working class.

The case for them is simple. Most, if not all, working class families have at some time or other realised that children are an expensive item. If they are to be decently provided for, then the parents must go short. And, however willing the parents may be to cut down their own expenditure for the sake of the children, a prolonged spell of unemployment will inevitably result in the children going short, too. The advocates of family allowances believe that they have discovered a simple remedy. Why not, they ask, introduce a system of allowances to be paid to the father or mother in respect of the children? Then the family income would be more nearly adjusted to the size of the family. Working class families with two or more children would be receiving a larger income than families with only one child. Single men and women would receive less still. Such systems have been introduced in France, Belgium, Austria, Germany, the Irish Free State, Australia, and elsewhere. Why not here also?

We oppose the proposal. Are we, then, opposed to the working class receiving more money? Do we object to workers' children being better provided for? Our answer is that we are most strongly in favour of the working class being made better off, both parents and children. We oppose the family

allowance scheme because we deny that it would produce any such result.

Wages are based, in the long run, on what it costs the workers to live. In different climates and for different trades this cost, which normally includes the expense of bringing up a family, differs. It includes certain items of expenditure based upon the traditional manner of living in the various countries. Thus, in France the workers' cost of living includes the cost of cheap wines, because everyone drinks wine. In the U.S.A., at least where Prohibition is enforced, the cost of living of the workers will not have to include the cost of alcoholic drinks, although, doubtless, it will have to include some dearer or cheaper alternative. The existence of a permanent army of unemployed enables the employers to bring pressure to bear to cut into the traditional element and force the wages of all workers down towards the bare physical minimum. On the other hand, Trade Unions can be useful centres of resistance to that pressure, but experience shows that the Trade Unions have not been able to overcome the pressure. When prices rise, it costs the workers more to live, and Trade Unions can usually secure some increase, if not a proportionate increase, in wages. When prices have fallen, wages have fallen also, sometimes ahead of the prices. We have seen these two processes at work since 1914. Up to 1920, prices and wages rose. Since 1920, prices and wages have fallen.

Our criticism of the advocates of family allowances can now be more clearly stated. Family allowances would cheapen the cost of living of working class families. The constant pressure would tend to force wages

down correspondingly. Five shillings would come in to mother, and be knocked off father's wages. There is the further objection that single men and single women would suffer also, with the result that the employers would be in pocket.

This has actually happened. In the Irish Free State, when married Civil Servants were given family allowances, the pay of the single men was reduced to the level of the single women. In the book, "Family Allowances in Practice" (Vibart, published by P. S. King, 1926), it is stated, on the authority of a Dutch economist, De Walle, that in Holland "whenever central and municipal authorities have introduced family allowances it has been with a view to making economies in their wages bills."

In Australia the pay of unmarried employees in the Post Office was reduced by £11 per head, which just covered the cost of the married men's allowances.

The *Australian Worker* (Sydney, October 28th, 1927) said that family allowances in New South Wales had been "manna from heaven—for the employers." Instead of a 12s. cost of living increase all round, which would have cost the employers £13 million a year, and which was due under the existing wage arrangements, the employers "gave" family allowances to the married men. These cost £3 million, thus saving the employers £10 million a year.

L. Ross, of the Australian Labour Party, writing in the *Socialist Review* (December, 1928), said:—

The New South Wales scheme, instead of redistributing wealth, actually meant a reshuffling of wages between single and married men.

Prominent advocates of family allowances make no bones about admitting this. They candidly confess that family allowances do not represent any addition to the income of the working class, and are not intended to.

Miss Eleanor Rathbone, M.P., is the best known of all the advocates of family allowances.

In a lecture which she gave to the Faculty of Insurance on April 2nd, 1927 (published in the *Journal of the Faculty*, July, 1927), she said that her object was not to raise wages or to secure an improvement in the conditions of the poor at the expense of the rich, but to re-distribute the workers' wages among themselves.

In other words, make the single men and women help to pay for the married men's children. Although Miss Rathbone's heart bleeds for the unfortunate children of the workers, her remedy was not to touch the superfluous wealth of her own class, but to lower the standard of living of unmarried workers. Let the rich go on with their horse-racing, their cigars, and their expensive society functions, but "the young men and the young women . . . would be expected to be willing to make some sacrifice at the expense of their cigarettes, cinemas, and betting on football."

Of course, we are told by the I.L.P. that their family allowance scheme is fundamentally different from Miss Rathbone's. They want family allowances to be a real addition to wages. They want them paid by the State, not by the employer. The I.L.P. believe that, if paid by the State, they could not have the effect of lowering wages, and in any event the Trade Unions would prevent such action by the employers. Lastly, the I.L.P. believe that family allowances would be paid during strikes and would thus help the Trade Unions.

Not one of these arguments will hold water.

If the I.L.P. scheme is in intention fundamentally different from Miss Rathbone's, why is Mr. Brailsford, the prominent member of the I.L.P. who helped to prepare their scheme, allowed to be a member of the Family Endowment Council in association with Miss Rathbone? Why did Mr. Brailsford act as joint author, with her and others, of a book, "Equal Pay and the Family"?

It is reasonable to assume that Mr. Brailsford attaches more importance to getting any sort of scheme of family allowances, by associating with Miss Rathbone, than to trying to get the I.L.P. scheme in opposition to Miss Rathbone.

Whether the allowances are paid by the State or by the employer makes no difference at all; in both cases they would reduce the workers' cost of living. In New South Wales they are paid by the State, but the effect is the same. In this country we have already seen the Wool Trade Committee, under Lord MacMillan, recommending a wage reduction in 1930 and giving as one of its reasons the fact that the workers' cost of living had been lowered

by unemployment pay, health insurance, old-age pensions, etc., all of them paid by the State.

When the I.L.P. fall back on the argument that the Trade Unions will resist such wage reductions, they are arguing with their tongue in their cheek, for their original reason for advocating family allowances was that the Unions were impotent. Here are Mr. Brailsford's words, in an article published by the *New Leader* on January 4th, 1929:—

Plainly, with our appalling surplus of unemployed labour, the usual methods for raising mass-purchasing power are beyond our reach. The Trade Unions can hardly defend their standards; certainly they cannot at present raise them. That is our justification for demanding political action in the form, firstly, of family allowances, and then of the fixing by the State of a standard living wage.

It will be seen that the I.L.P. are simply arguing in a circle. They say, in effect: "As the Trade Unions cannot resist the employers, let us ask for family allowances; and then ask the Trade Unions to resist the employers' attempts to reduce wages."

Lastly, there is the question of strikes. There was a strike of textile workers in France in August, 1930. The following is a report by the Paris correspondent of *The Times* (August 28th, 1930):—

2,800 workmen are reported to have returned to work during the last two days, and an even larger number is expected to return on September 1st in order not to lose the marriage and family allowance for that month.

The whole scheme is a fraud from the workers' standpoint. The bulk of its advocates never intended it to be anything else. The others, the I.L.P., find themselves in this anti-working-class camp for the same reasons as on many other occasions. The reasons are their own clear ignorance of economics and of Socialist principles generally, and their incurable weakness for what Mr. Ramsay MacDonald has called "flashy futilities." H.

CORRECTION.

Through an unfortunate printer's error, a line of type was misplaced from the top of column one on page 77 of the January SOCIALIST STANDARD, and placed at the foot of column two.

TWICKENHAM.

Those readers living in or near the above district, who are willing to assist in forming a local branch of the Party, are invited to communicate with the Secretary at Head Office.

THE BANKRUPTCY OF LIBERALISM.

A LIBERAL ECONOMIST ON THE PROBLEMS OF CAPITALISM.

In his book, "The Problem of Industrial Relations" (MacMillan & Co., 1929), Professor Clay maintains that the "problem of industrial relations" is how to secure harmonious relations between worker and employer, how to find "an adjustment of the interests of employers and employed, that will secure the co-operation of both in the work of production" (page 3). The present order of society riven into two conflicting classes, the owners of the means of living and the non-owners, he accepts without question. He admits that industrial unrest arises from the conflict of interests between employer and employed, and he is concerned with reducing to a minimum the economic friction between these two classes.

His main thesis is that inequality of wage rates, intensified during the war period, as between one trade or industry and another, is largely responsible for industrial disputes, and that attention should therefore be directed towards "the equalisation of bargaining strength among all sections of wage-earners," either by the lower-paid workers themselves organising in Trade Unions, or by Government regulations to prevent sweating, so that all sections of the working class can obtain a "fair wage." He devotes several chapters to a discussion of the spread of Trade Unionism during the War, and the growth of arbitration and conciliation methods—Trade Boards, Whitley Councils, Joint Industrial Councils, Works Committees, Industrial Courts of Arbitration, and so forth—means of negotiation which enable a trial of strength between organised employers and employees to be made, or, as Clay says, "interpret the interplay of economic and social forces" (p. 234) and so enable wage disputes to be settled without strike or lock-out to interrupt the flow of profits to the capitalist.

To the Socialist, however, the problem is not one of ensuring that the lion and the lamb shall lie down together, but of waking the working class up to understand the economic and social forces which make them wage-slaves. So long as the means of wealth production and distribution are privately owned by the capitalist class, so long

will the labour power of the propertyless worker be a commodity which he must sell for the best price he can get according to the fluctuations of supply and demand. Whether at any particular moment he gets "fair" wages or foul, the fierce competition arising from ever-present unemployment prevents wages in the long run from exceeding the cost of living a shoddy life. As stated in one of the reports of the Whitley Committee on the machinery of industrial conciliation, which Clay quotes, "... such machinery cannot be expected to furnish a settlement for the more serious conflicts of interest involved in the working of an economic system primarily governed and directed by motives of private profit" (p. 150). The remedy for this problem is for society to own the means of production, and to produce for use.

At some length, Professor Clay tries to show that "wage rates and unemployment are correlatives; if a wage rate is too high, it will cause unemployment" (p. 245), and that "it is no kindness to fix wage rates above the level set by an industry's capacity to pay wages and still employ its labour" (p. 192). He holds that "normal" unemployment is mainly due to the wrong distribution of labour force; and the present abnormal unemployment he attributes to the War, which enhanced the maldistribution of labour force and removed a part of England's markets. He therefore advocates that wages should, in some cases, be lowered, so that lost markets may be recovered from foreign competitors.

The old story of more work and less wages to recapture lost markets! The standard of living in Germany is a little lower than in England, and there are 3,000,000 German workers unemployed; the standard of living in America is a little higher than in England, and the number of unemployed American workers has been estimated at about 7,000,000. Unemployment is increasing in Holland, Belgium, France, Italy, and elsewhere. In all these countries the employers' journalistic and academic servants are urging the workers to work harder for lower wages, in a world glutted with products which cannot find buyers, whilst in many branches of production desperate efforts are being made to restrict output!

Unemployment is an inevitable feature of capitalism, and its tendency is to increase.

Dealing with American unemployment, *The Times* (August 8th, 1930) says: "It is beginning to be realised at long last that even if a recovery in business on a scale no longer thought probable should occur, it would not go very far to solve the unemployment problem. Throughout the years of fabulous prosperity that preceded the crash of last autumn unemployment was steadily increasing. The same processes of technological change, including the rapid substitution of capital for labour in industrial and agricultural production, were going on before the crash, are going on now, and will continue."

Professor Clay recognises the increasing insecurity of "the propertyless worker, whether unskilled labourer, responsible organiser, or scientific expert" (p. 270), but fails to suggest the logical remedy. Only when the means of production are commonly owned and democratically controlled by the whole community will the application of science to production cease to divide the vast majority of mankind into the overworked and the unemployed. "Meantime," says *The Times* (July 29th, 1930), "rationalisation and unemployment are both increasing."

Clay's attempt to show that the various forms of public relief and social insurance increase the real income of the working class is really funny. First, he says that since these social services are paid for with money provided by taxation, and practically all the wage-earners fall below the income-tax exemption limit, then "the aggregate expenditure on social services is in the main an addition to the real income of the class that draws wages" (p. 247). He forgets that these social services, by lowering the cost of living, also tend to lower the workers' wages in a labour market where there are always more men than jobs. Lord MacMillan, in making his report on woollen wage reductions, pointed out that social services such as pensions, insurance, etc., should be taken into consideration in fixing present-day wages. And Lord MacMillan was only stating explicitly a principle already being put into operation by the employers generally.

Clay himself gives figures showing that during the period from 1880 to 1914 real wages were falling whilst expenditure on social services was increasing; and points out that "the increase in expenditure

... has followed, and to a large extent compensated for, the check to the rise in real wages." Finally, he concludes that the effect of these social services "was to change the form, without altering the amount of wages. They ordained that the worker, instead of getting all his earnings in weekly wages, should get a part in the form of rights to income in sickness and unemployment, ... (they) secured a better distribution of the wage-earner's income, reducing it when he was working, but insuring that it did not cease when he was unable to work. Wage-earners could have made a similar provision for themselves, as some of them did, through Friendly Societies and Trade Unions" (p. 249).

His chapters on the distribution of property are a plea for the small property owner, and he gives many useful facts and figures with regard to the distribution of wealth in this and other countries. He shows that the total value of the property left by 97,000 rich people who died during the year ending March, 1921, was £431,000,000, an average of nearly £4,500 per person, whilst "five-sixths of the population may be presumed to have less than £100 property each." He asks, "How many working-class homes would have fetched more than £20, if sold up, before the War?" (p. 286). He also shows that alongside the increasing inequality of wealth has proceeded a change in its composition, contractual rights to money payments taking the place of real property, and this to an increasing extent in larger estates. A rich man's estate consists largely of stocks and shares.

Clay describes this change in the nature of the right of property, brought about by capitalism, as the change involved in "the separation of the ownership and use of wealth," by which property comes to consist not of a concrete thing but of a right to income. Before the days of capitalism, the simple tools of peasant and craftsman were their individual property. To-day a railway shareholder cannot point to a single nut or smut as his own; but he holds a right to share in the profits. Clay shows from the Estate Duty returns that whereas house and business premises represent about 16 per cent., and land only about 9 per cent. of the total property, nearly 45 per cent. is in Stock Exchange securities; or,

in other words, the largest element in property to-day is simply the claim to a share in the profits of industry, i.e., a legal right to live on the back of the working class. Clay is right in regarding this revolution in the form of property as being based on the change from puny individual production to mass production and distribution on a large scale by machinery too vast for individual ownership; but he is wrong in speaking of it as having resulted from "the separation of the ownership from the use and administration of capital." The tools of the mediæval craftsman were not capital. He makes the common error of confusing "capital" with "instruments of production," which only became capital as a result of this separation of ownership from operation, by which the capitalist class, owning the means of production, can live on the wealth produced by the propertyless working class, who alone organise and operate the whole vast and complex mechanism of production and distribution.

The Professor is distressed at "the inequality of incomes, which is a chief cause of social unrest and the chief cause of waste in the modern economic system"; but he desires "the maintenance of the present right of property." He wants property more evenly distributed, so as to check the growing inequality of wealth which threatens to engulf the small property owner and crush his "personal independence" (p. 267). He wishes to alleviate effects without abolishing fundamental causes. He wishes especially to remove those effects which injure the "middle class," by means of some scheme of taxation "to enforce a continual re-distribution of property" for "the creation of a large independent class of small owners." He regrets that "it would hardly be possible to frame a (scheme) ... that would reach any large proportion of the propertyless proletariat; but it would be easy to frame a scheme that would do something to restore the fortunes of the non-commercial, small-property middle class, on whom, since the aristocracy was superseded by a plutocracy, the maintenance of the finer arts of life mainly depends" (p. 313).

Thus, "economic inequality remains to be redressed," but "no revolutionary change ... is needed" (p. 317). For the wolf shall dwell with the lamb, and the leopard shall lie down with the kid; and

the calf and the young lion and the fatling together; and a little (professorial) child shall lead them.

In his last chapter, Clay defends the Liberal Party, a Liberal Party which stands for Free Trade and freedom of enterprise, as the only alternative to "a Conservative Party that is protectionist in principle, and a Labour Party that is socialist in principle." He advocates "freedom of private enterprise" as contrasted with the State monopoly of industry (which he imagines is Socialism); "freedom of international trade as a safeguard of international peace"; and "a wider diffusion of property" to correct the growing inequality of wealth.

Apart from the absurd suggestion that the Labour Party is Socialist (their only service to the Socialist movement is their refusal to allow official Labour candidates to label themselves Socialist), it is very clear that Clay confuses Socialism with Nationalisation. He says: "None of the numerous varieties of Socialism . . . could have any effect except still further to concentrate authority and subject the workers to a more detailed and complete subordination. All alike involve the establishment of legal monopolies, and are based on the subordination of the economic organisation to the State. The extinction of free enterprise by the competition and legalisation of monopoly would result in a bureaucratic inequality as oppressive as, and more difficult to control than, the present inequality" (p. 311). This is true enough if the word "Nationalisation" is substituted for "Socialism." The nationalisation of an industry means that it is controlled, not by individual capitalists, but by the capitalist class as a whole through the Government, which is its "board of directors." Thus Clay, thinking he is discrediting Socialism, only condemns the latest and most complete form of capitalist organisation.

He has to recognise, however, that "the extension of the State's economic activities is necessary and will continue," although he desires "to keep the political and the economic organisation of society distinct" and "to develop international trade as a safeguard of international peace" (p. 306); for, he says, "we are members of an economic community . . . the boundaries of which do not coincide with those of any State." He fails to grasp that the political

division of the world into antagonistic States, when all its parts are economically dependent one upon another, is the political reflection of the contradiction inherent in capitalism; the contradiction of the social use and operation of the tools of production by the working class of the world, alongside the private ownership of these tools by competing groups of capitalists in the Great and Minor Powers.

This contradiction between social production and private ownership is the rock upon which capitalism splits. It has been the historical function of the capitalist class to bring about social production, with its enormous possibilities for human comfort and culture; it is the historical function of the working class to bring social ownership and control into line with social operation, and make these possibilities a glorious reality.

F. EVANS.

IS STEEL MORE USEFUL THAN TOBACCO?

Mr. G. T. Sadler, M.A., LL.B. (Manchester), asks us to recognise a distinction between "useful" companies, such as cotton, steel, and railway companies, and less useful companies, such as tobacco and art silk companies. While investors in the former have lost money, the latter have paid big dividends.

The idea behind Mr. Sadler's suggestion is that some companies satisfy needs which are more vital than others and, therefore, the investors in these companies ought to receive more favourable treatment. We cannot, for one moment, accept such an argument. Under capitalism companies do not produce this or that article to satisfy human needs, but to sell to those who can afford to buy, and thus to make a profit. Investors invest in order to get a return on their capital. To the investor all production is "useful" production which yields him a profit, and to the worker all production is "useful" which gives him employment. That is capitalism. We are out for the abolition of capitalism, because an investing class is a privileged and totally unnecessary class, whatever the nature of the product in which the individual investor is interested.

Sunday Evening Lectures.

Head Office: 42 Gt. Dover Street, S.E.

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|-----------------------------------|---------|-------------|
| February 1st | | E. Hardy |
| 'Socialism v. Family Allowances.' | | |
| February 8th | | E. Lake |
| 'From Chartism to Socialism.' | | |
| February 15th | .. .. . | B. Carthurs |
| 'What we Must Do to be Saved.' | | |
| February 22nd | .. .. . | H. Waite |
| 'Politics and Government.' | | |

Meetings commence at 8 p.m. Non-members invited.
Questions and Discussion. Admission Free.

CURRENCY, CREDIT AND SOCIALISM.

Mr. B. Benjamin (Catford) writes that, "although there is no shortage of gold, there is quite definitely a shortage of money in circulation in practically every country in the world." The only evidence Mr. Benjamin gives is a statement that there is no "affluence among the working classes." He writes: "The phenomena of falling prices, of stark poverty, and starvation in an age of plenty are indisputable signs of a decrease in the purchasing power of the nation." So far from this statement being "indisputable," we emphatically do dispute it. It is simply not true.

In view of the fact that purchasing power arises, and can only arise, from the existence of goods and services of one kind or another in the market, there cannot be any difference between the total of goods in the world and the total of purchasing power. The two appearances are only opposite aspects of the same thing.

Mr. Benjamin is quite correct when he says that the workers lack purchasing power, but he fails to see the meaning of his own further statement that there is "starvation in an age of plenty." The workers lack purchasing power because the capitalist class control a large portion of it. We mentioned in the January issue that investors offered £140 million for a £3½ million issue of shares. Does this indicate lack of purchasing power?

If shortage of money has caused a shortage of purchasing power (these are two different things, let it be noticed), why are the capitalists in the main not affected?

Mr. Edwin Wright (S.E.5) also writes about "money reform." He says:—

You have rejected the greatest discovery of modern or any time which would enable a Labour Government to establish socialism without bloodshed. . . . I base my policy upon the fact that "banks create money"—that they have created £2,000,000,000 of money. . . . As the Chairman of the Midland Bank admits, credit money is created by bankers.

We have on previous occasions had letters from Mr. Wright, but he continues to repeat his absurd statements without dealing with our answers to them.

First, let us disabuse Mr. Wright's mind of the illusion that his money reform scheme is modern. It was already hoary with age when Marx wrote about credit in Volume

III of "Capital," and when John Stuart Mill disproved it and described it as a "confused notion" in his "Principles of Political Economy" (see People's Edition, page 309, published in 1872). Mill wrote his book before 1847.

Mr. Wright offers us a scheme which "would enable a Labour Government to establish Socialism." What he does not tell us is how he is going to make the Labour Government want to establish Socialism; and how, after that, he is going to make the Liberals keep the Labour Government in office when it starts trying to establish Socialism; and how, when it gets thrown out through loss of Liberal support, he is going to make the workers (who in the main do not yet want Socialism) vote for Socialism. Mr. Wright forgets, too, that he has on previous occasions told us that capitalists support his scheme as a means of saving capitalism.

Mr. Wright says that the banks have created £2,000 millions of deposits. His evidence for this is that Mr. McKenna is supposed to have said so many years ago. Mr. Wright ignores the address given by Mr. McKenna at the 1930 meeting of the Midland Bank, in which he ridiculed the idea (see "S.S.," March, 1930).

It would also be interesting to know why, if banks can "create credit," they do not create it for themselves instead of doing so for their depositors, and then paying the same depositors millions of pounds of interest on their deposits. Also, why do not Governments which control State banks use this power which Mr. Wright believes they possess? Why, for example, does the Russian Government try to borrow money abroad and pay high rates of interest on loans at home?

ED. COMM.

EAST LONDON.

A Meeting will be held at
BROMLEY PUBLIC HALL

ON
Sunday, February 8th, 1931.

Speaker E. HARDY

Subject—
"How to STOP WAGE REDUCTIONS."
Doors open 7.30 p.m. Admission Free.
Non-Members Invited.
Questions and Discussion.

OFFICIAL NOTICE.

All communications for the Executive Committee, Subscriptions for the SOCIALIST STANDARD, Articles, and Correspondence submitted for insertion therein, should be addressed—The Socialist Party of Great Britain, 42, Great Dover Street, London, S.E.1, to whom Money Orders should be made payable.

The meetings of the Executive Committee are held at the Head Office, every Tuesday, at 7.30 p.m.

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The Socialist Standard,

FEB.,



1931

WHAT THE COTTON LOCK-OUT MEANS.

Yesterday the miners. To-day the weavers. Next the railwaymen. Then—!! So goes on the attempt to force down wages all round—and the Labour Government lends the capitalist their valuable assistance as mediators—on the capitalists' side.

At the moment of writing, a ballot is being taken amongst the Lancashire weavers on the question of giving Trade Union officials power to negotiate with the employers. If the weavers vote in favour of the proposal, then they accept the principle of more looms per weaver; if they turn the proposal down, they are faced with the problem of getting food and heat in mid-winter. The masters have chosen the time for the struggle and have seen to it the time was favourable to themselves.

The origin of the strife in Lancashire was the attempt on the part of the employers to get each weaver to work more looms than formerly—eight instead of four.. The *Manchester Guardian* for January 21st publishes a statement by the Nelson and District Weavers' Association, from which the following extracts are taken.

The trouble started in 1928. The "Burnley employers approached the weavers' committee with a request to be

allowed to try and experiment in certain mills in the town. The terms were that at ten firms no more than 4 per cent. of the looms should be slowed down, provided with better yarn, with weft on larger cops, and should be tried for an experimental period of twelve months, at the end of which the experiment should be discontinued if either side was not contented with it. Each weaver on the experiment should run eight looms, and only ordinary Burnley printers' cloth should be made."

The Burnley Committee referred the matter to the Amalgamation of which they were members, and it was ultimately agreed that the experiment should be carried out, the period to be April 1st, 1929, to March 31st, 1930.

The weavers very soon found out what they had let themselves in for. Almost from the beginning of the experiment the employers ignored the terms of it. Looms were speeded up and, instead of Burnley printers' cloth only being made, different kinds of cloth were made and they returned to inferior yarns. When the weavers' representatives attempted to obtain information of the progress of the experiment, the employers met them with the statement: "We have a lot of matter here which we can make neither head nor tail of; you can come and look at it if you like." This, of course, was merely a "blind." The employers were ignoring the agreement and going ahead with their arrangements for cheaper production—and incidentally the future swelling of the unemployed army by the weavers thrown out of employment by the doubling of the number of looms per weaver.

When the Swift arbitration award, blessed by the Labour Government, reduced other weavers' wages, the experimenting employers cut the wages they had pledged themselves to retain until the end of the experiment. It had been agreed that if either side were dissatisfied, the experiments should be discontinued. The weavers are now dissatisfied, but the employers say the experiments must go on.

That, in short, is the position at the moment.

The weavers have been badly caught; they have been trebly caught. In spite of the bitter experiences of the past, they trusted the soft words of the employers. On the plea that cheaper production was

essential to rehabilitate Lancashire industry (how often the old trick is worked!), they allowed themselves to be hoodwinked into producing a greater quantity of cloth with less labour, thus speeding up the time when their labour would be redundant and an increasing number of them thrown out of work. Finally, they have allowed the employers to protract the negotiations until the time was most favourable for themselves to bring matters to a head. In mid-winter it is harder for the workers to stand a period of unemployment. On top of that, the employers, can afford to have their mills idle for a while just now without much loss, as the following comment of the *Manchester Guardian* (July 21st) testifies:—

The least unsatisfactory feature of the stoppage is that it has come at a time when demand is very slack, and, although it is bound to have very serious results, it seems impossible that either employers or operatives will have cause to regret it on grounds that it has caused a great deal of business to be lost. . . . There are stocks of cloth in Lancashire, and many producers can still guarantee delivery, so that the available supply should go part of the way towards meeting any demand which would normally have been experienced here.

As we have so often pointed out in these columns, the aim of the capitalist at all times is to obtain the maximum of production at the minimum cost in wages, and wherever they can accomplish it without seriously interfering with their profits, the capitalists are always anxious to push down wages. Consequently the employers are always on the look-out for means of increasing output per worker by improvements in machinery, by extension of hours or of work, or by better methods of organisation. The wholesale adoption of mass production, in spite of a glutted market, is an instance of this.

The capitalist class as a whole grows relatively richer every year, and the working class grows relatively poorer. The workers must fight to resist the constant attempts of the masters to extract more work for less pay, but they should endeavour to choose the time most suitable to themselves, and they should not give ear so readily to the eternal negotiators and mediators who negotiate and mediate against them.

In spite of the heroic efforts of the workers, they are fighting the battle on the wrong ground. On the economic field the capitalist is the stronger, and while the worker accepts capitalist ownership of the means of the production the capitalists will

remain the stronger. This unpalatable truth must be faced by the workers and they must grasp the fact (and grasp it soon, or risk utter degradation) that the capitalist class has neither natural nor supernatural right to the control of society, and only owns and rules because society, the vast mass of which is composed of workers, gives it that control and can take the control away as soon as the desire exists. The declaration of principles on the back page puts the position simply and clearly.

OUR READERS AND THE NEXT GENERAL ELECTION.

We are not prophesying an early General Election, but we want to be prepared for it whenever it may come. Will readers who would be willing to take S.P.G.B. election leaflets for free distribution at public meetings, Trade Union branches, among their friends, etc., let us have now their name and address, and an indication of the number of leaflets they think they could usefully dispose of? It is of importance that the Socialist Party's case should be made as widely known as possible, in particular our opposition to the Labour Party and its affiliated parties. Your assistance will be of great value. Write to the General Secretary at 42, Great Dover Street, London, S.E.1.

BATTERSEA**An Indoor Meeting**

will be held in the
WAITING ROOM,

LATCHMERE ROAD BATHS

on
19th February, 1931, at 8.30 p.m.

Speaker E. WILMOTT.

Subject—

"SOCIALISM AND TRADE UNIONISM."

Questions and Discussion.
Non-Members invited.

"Socialism and Religion."

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THE SOCIALIST FORUM.

SOCIALISM BY DICTATORSHIP.

Mr. R. J. Freeman (Thornton Heath) writes, putting forward several points of criticism of our position. For convenience and in order to save space, these points have been extracted from the letter and numbered:—

1. The S.P.G.B. proposes to do nothing to ameliorate the conditions of the working class, other than press the socialist doctrine wherever possible as the only remedy.
2. This work of propaganda can still be carried on by the I.L.P. members outside of Parliament just as persistently as the S.P.G.B., and by their presence in the House of Commons as well, can attempt to resist encroachments on the workers' standard of living.
3. I admit socialist knowledge is growing, but it is not due, as you would suggest, to the theory of the increasing poverty and economic pressure making them think . . . , but because capitalism breeds it.
4. The industrial worker . . . has a remarkable memory for the names of racehorses, prize-fighters, footballers, etc. . . . It is extremely doubtful whether the increasing poverty of this section will ever make them socialists.
5. I suggest socialism is more likely to be achieved through the action of the administrative and professional section, because they will see the futility of trying to permeate the concrete skulls of the other section and would rather establish a dictatorship and so force an un-intelligent majority to come into line with an enlightened minority.

Reply.

1. The S.P.G.B. is obviously not in a position to "ameliorate the conditions of the working class," but it can and does support useful action by the workers in their Unions to resist encroachments on their standard of living. If our correspondent knows of some other way in which the workers' conditions can be ameliorated, will he explain why he, and those who agree with him, do not put it into operation?
2. We challenge our critic to give us evidence that the I.L.P., either inside or outside the House of Commons, is carrying on, or has ever carried on, propaganda for Socialism. As we pointed out in the January issue, every single I.L.P. member who has entered Parliament has done so on the programme of the Labour Party, a programme which Mr. Maxton describes as "an enlightened Liberal programme" (see "Our Case," page 11). Mr. Maxton added that if the whole of the Labour Party pro-

gramme were put into operation "we would have not Socialism but rationalised capitalism."

We deny that this is propaganda for Socialism.

In view of the fact that prominent members of the I.L.P. have repeatedly stated that the workers under Labour Government are worse off than under the Tory Government, we would ask for evidence that the presence in Parliament of members of the I.L.P. has enabled the workers to resist encroachments. Mr. Freeman does not deny or answer our statement that upwards of two million workers have had their wages reduced since the Labour Government came into office.

3. We have never said that poverty would make Socialists. It is the whole organisation and development of capitalism, together with Socialist propaganda, which make Socialists.

4. May we point out that it is in the columns of the *Daily Herald*, which the I.L.P. tells the workers to read, that racing, boxing, and football news are provided?

See also answer to 3.

5. Before suggesting that the administrative and professional section "will see the futility of trying to permeate the concrete skulls" of the industrial workers, Mr. Freeman should have told us when the professional section are going to begin to think about Socialism themselves. We have seen nothing to indicate that they are in advance of the lower-paid workers. The assumption that these people will establish a dictatorship is in line with the bumptious silliness of the so-called "middle class" themselves. In the first place, they are not "an enlightened minority"; their behaviour during the war-fever marked them out as being credulous, ignorant, brutal and unstable beyond the average. In the second place, they are a minority and, whether they like it or not, they have to shape their lives within a social framework which depends for its existence on the consent of the majority. Mr. Freeman writes glibly of dictatorship, but evidently has not observed that Mussolini and his imitators came into power because, and only because, they had been placed in control of the armed forces through having behind them a Parliamentary majority. It remains for Mr. Freeman to explain how the people he has in mind are going to get control of Parlia-

ment; and then to explain how they are going to impose Socialism on a hostile working class.

Ed. COMM.

SOCIALISM AND EQUALITY.

A correspondent writes asking us whether we base our case for Socialism on a supposition that human beings are equal. This is the question:—

On what foundation is your "Declaration of Principles" built, seeing that the only justification for "common ownership and control" can be that of "Equality," and that "Equality" does not exist, since no two human beings are ever born equal and consequently can never live the same life (whatever the conditions), or die equal? Without "Equality" the principle of "common ownership and control" is surely most unjust. Does your "socialism" wish to make the conditions of life similar for those who possess and those who do not possess a number of commendable qualities?

(Here follows a list of such qualities and their opposites.)

Our correspondent is mistaken in thinking that Socialism is based on any such claim. Human beings do not possess the same attributes, combined in the same proportions, and therefore a claim that they are equal would be absurd.

On the other hand, the suggestion that there can be no other justification for "common ownership and democratic control" itself requires proof, and our correspondent offers none except the statement that it is "surely most unjust" to make the conditions of life similar for the bad character and the good character. Without going into the relevant question of the conditions which produce "bad" and "good" characters, we would point out that capitalism most flagrantly fails to apportion economic rewards according to such merits, and yet it manages to survive. People lucky enough to have been born into the privileged ranks of the propertied class do not have to produce certificates of wisdom, bravery, cleanliness, industry or anything else before being permitted to draw dividends on investments. The possession of property means now the legal right (backed up by the forces of the State) of preventing the working class from using nature-given material and instruments of production (fashioned also by the working class) to produce wealth, except upon the condition that the property owner shall be permitted to live at the expense of the wealth producers.

The capitalist system has now outlived its usefulness, and the capitalist class has become an unnecessary class. The class can be dispensed with and the system replaced with advantage to the working class, who are the great majority and can impose their will when they choose to do so. That is the basis of Socialism. No other basis is needed.

* * *

SHOULD WE CONTEST ELECTIONS?

Two Camberwell readers (S. and C. Roberts) criticise our attitude towards elections. They write:—

During the last General Election we were told that you were preparing to contest North Battersea. We were further informed that you had a membership of less than 50 in the whole of Battersea. We take this membership as a measure of support in Battersea, and maintain that in preparing to contest an election where the working class had no desire for socialism (proved by small membership), was anti-socialist action. Also, seeing that you agree with Marx that the emancipation of the working class must be the act of the working class itself, condemns you, and though your speeches and pamphlets are socialistic, it is the actions of a party or person which determine their true status in the present order of society.

Reply.

The criticism is evidently based upon incorrect information about the Socialist Party's attitude. The criticism would have point if it had been proposed to run a candidate in North Battersea or elsewhere on a programme drawn up with a view to attracting the support and votes of non-Socialists. But there was no such intention. Socialist Party candidates for election run on no programme except that which our readers see in our literature, and they would receive, therefore, the votes only of those who want Socialism and reject the programmes of the opposing candidates. The number of persons who want Socialism and would vote for it would, although small, be larger than our enrolled membership.

From its formation the Socialist Party has regarded the contesting of elections as a means of propaganda to be used along with other means of propaganda. Good work has been done at council elections in the past.

We accept Marx's dictum that the working class must achieve their own emancipation. But Marx, of course, did not mean by this that nothing should be done until

the working class as a whole decide upon doing it. If that attitude were correct, then the Socialist Party could not have been formed. The action of forming a Socialist organisation of any kind at a time when "the working class have no desire for Socialism" would, according to such reasoning, "be anti-Socialist action."

Marx, it is interesting to observe, had considered this situation and wholeheartedly agreed with the attitude which the Socialist Party takes up. In his "Address to the Communist League" he wrote:—

Even in constituencies where there is no prospect of our candidate being elected, the workers must nevertheless put up candidates in order to maintain their independence, to steel their forces, and to bring their revolutionary attitude and party views before the public.

ED. COMM.

"TOO MUCH WEALTH IN THE WORLD."

Mr. Lloyd George, at Barmouth, North Wales, yesterday, said that unemployment was creeping over the whole world, but it was difficult to explain why. There was a famine, not because there was not enough corn, but because there was too much corn. There was too much wealth in the world, too much iron, steel, coal, etc. We were suffering because we had too much wealth. The big question confronting the nation at the present time was how were they to deal with the problem of unemployment.

Mr. Lloyd George says it is difficult to explain why. On the contrary, it is one of the easiest things in the world to explain—and to understand—why unemployment is "creeping" over the whole world. The wealth of the world, produced by the working class, belongs to the capitalist class. This wealth has to be sold in the world's markets in order to realise for its owners the difference between the wages and other costs paid for its production and its value on the market. A difference known to the Socialist as surplus value. As the wants of the capitalists and the wages of the workers are limited, the world market is always more or less choked with goods for which there are no buyers. The competition for markets compels ever cheaper methods of production, only to be attained by reducing the number of workers engaged in production.

This is the explanation in a nut-shell. It has been elaborated more fully many times in the columns of THE SOCIALIST STANDARD:

Mr. Lloyd George knows this to be the only explanation. His difficulty is not so much in explaining, as in appearing to be wise on the subject without giving the game away for the class he represents.

His next statement, that there is too much wealth in the world, should be read the other way round: There are not enough markets to absorb the wealth owned by the capitalist class. We can then understand both the "creeping" unemployment and the over-production of wealth.

The big question, How to deal with the problem of unemployment? has also been answered in THE SOCIALIST STANDARD many times. Mr. Lloyd George's way is the capitalist way: enough dole to keep them quiet, and enough armed force in case of trouble. The only working class way is to understand and organise for Socialism. While the capitalist class own the means of life, the workers are compelled to work for wages, a condition which enables the capitalist class to appropriate the major portion of the wealth as surplus value, and scrap workers wholesale in order to increase the amount.

F. F.

SOCIALIST ORGANISATION.

H. Scott (Leeds), asks:—

If the S.P.G.B. gained political power, would it not have to start organising industrially, rather than territorially, before we got socialism?

The answer is no. The control of the political machine by a socialist working class means the enacting of common ownership—that is socialism. The Socialist Society will be carried on by the workers, whose common interests will be expressed territorially and industrially and in every field. The production of wealth will result from the organisation of industry arranged democratically by a socialist population.

A. K.

A correspondent asks if Mr. Ramsay MacDonald and Mr. Philip Snowden were ever members of the Socialist Party. They have never been members of the Socialist Party.

Morlite (North End). Thanks for the suggestion. We will see what we can do.

HAVE YOU READ
—this Pamphlet—
"SOCIALISM."

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THE SOCIALIST PARTY AND THE TRADE UNIONS.

The Socialist Party and the Trade Unions have a common origin in the class struggle. The former is the organised expression on the political field of the conscious recognition of that struggle by the workers. Its growth is the measure of their determination to end the struggle by converting the means of living into common property, and thus establishing a harmony of interests within society.

The class struggle, however, does not commence with the conscious recognition of it as a fact. "In the beginning is the thing"; the idea follows in its wake, and is, in fact, its reflection in the human mind.

Long before the origin of the Socialist Party the class struggle was in progress. Strikes and lock-outs, machine-breaking and penal legislation have all testified to the antagonism of interests in modern society for over a century.

With the rise of the factory system, the workers found themselves involved in the struggle in grim earnest. It was no choice of theirs but thrust itself upon them with relentless and increasing force with every step in industrial evolution. At first the workers acted instinctively rather than rationally. The Luddite machine-smashing riots were a type of this phase of the conflict, but with further experience and time for reflection, the need for some form of organisation impressed itself upon the workers. The grouping together of the workers in the factories provided a basis for this organisation. They began to realise that the machines had come to stay; that henceforward they were condemned to lives of toil for the profit of the factory owners, and the former independence which they had enjoyed, while still often working in their own homes under the handicraft system, had gone for ever. Hence the Trade Unions arose, uniting the workers in similar or allied occupations in order to get from the masters the best terms obtainable.

From the first the strike was their most important weapon. Under the handicraft system, in its decay, the workers had to bargain with the merchant capitalists over the price of the goods produced; but the factory system changed all that. The price of the workers' own labour-power became the object of dispute. They sold their energies piecemeal by the hour, day or week,

and the system of piece-work, which was retained here and there, only disguised, did not alter that fact. The individual worker had lost all substantial freedom, and his only alternative to working at the terms of the master was starvation. Hence the right to withhold his labour-power in conjunction with his fellows became an essential means of resistance. Without it the workers would have been crushed beyond power of recovery, and would have become, in Marx's words, quite incapable of "initiating any large movement." (See the pamphlet, "Value, Price, and Profit.")

From the outset, however, the Trade Unions found arrayed against them, not only the individual masters or groups with whom they were directly struggling, but the forces of the entire master-class, as represented by the State. For long enough the Unions were subject to legal persecution as unlawful conspiracies and monopolies, and only by dint of considerable perseverance, were those obstacles overcome. The workers, indeed, had their backs to the wall, and only the fact that the Unions were rooted in the new conditions saved them from annihilation.

By degrees, however, the master class saw the unwisdom of trying to destroy the new organisations, and the Unions were granted a legal status. In like manner the teeth of the Chartist's movement were also drawn by the partial granting of their demands.

In the course of time the masters discovered that respectable labour leaders, whether upon the field of industry or politics, were useful in helping to maintain industrial peace, which was so much needed by the employers.

Judicious flattery, not to speak of more tangible inducements to make terms favourable to the employers, have stimulated the ambitions of numerous leaders whom the workers have all too readily trusted. Underlying this process, however, has been the steady progress of capitalist industry. The constant improvement of machinery, methods of working, and financial organisation on the part of the masters, have placed very strict limits upon the demands of the workers for generations past, because the latter's power to exact these demands has grown steadily less. Trade Union organisation has failed to keep pace with its capitalist counterpart, if only for the simple reason that competition between the workers grows keener as the army of the unemployed increases and the number of competing

capitalist concerns grows less numerous. Under these circumstances, the efficiency of the Unions as fighting forces has been steadily undermined, until it has become recognised as a matter of course among observant workers that even on the rare occasions when market conditions favour the workers they are fobbed off with a meagre concession.

More ominous than any of the factors mentioned above is the part played by the armed forces of the State. As the magnitude of the forces engaged in the struggle on either side increases, so the intervention of the State in industrial disputes is rendered more certain. The necessity of maintaining order under capitalism leaves the Government no alternative, and as the technical efficiency of the forces at its disposal (as exemplified in aeroplanes and poison-gas bombs) has now reached a terrifying pitch, the futility of the strike as an offensive weapon against the State authorities should be obvious to every thinking person.

What, then, is to be the future of the Trade Unions? At present they appear to have become to a large extent merely jumping-off grounds for so-called Labour politicians and to that extent less useful to the workers; but there is no obvious reason why, with the spread of understanding among their members, they should not be once again valuable centres of resistance to capitalist attack.

As we have seen, the Trade Unions arose from the pressure of their immediate needs upon the workers in the early days of capitalism. They necessarily took the form most convenient at the moment, and have adapted themselves to changing circumstances more or less blindly. They have, therefore, invariably over-emphasised the importance of sectional distinctions between the workers. The Socialist Party, organised as it is for the emancipation of the workers as a class, insists upon the necessity of subordinating all such distinctions to class solidarity. On the political field the workers have but one interest, and that involves winning political power, and dispossessing the master-class.

The supreme conflict with that class leaves no room for sectional antagonisms between the workers.

The Socialist Party, therefore, advises Trade Unionists to offer their utmost resistance to the worsening of their conditions,

but never fails to point out that under capitalism the pressure upon the workers is inevitable. It is insufficient, therefore, merely to apply the brake. We must change the direction of social development, and for that purpose the establishment of Socialism is essential. E. B.

ARE THE WORKERS WORSE OFF?

Mr. W. Jennings (Harringay) quotes from Marx's "Capital" the following passage (page 661, Glaiser edition):—

Accumulation of wealth at one pole is, therefore, at the same time accumulation of misery, agony of toil, slavery, ignorance, brutality, mental degradation, at the opposite pole.

Mr. Jennings asserts, without evidence, that the workers are getting better off and that "they do take a greater share of the wealth produced." On the strength of this he writes: "Perhaps, after all, Marx was not infallible."

Marx was not infallible, but Mr. Jennings has yet to show Marx wrong on the point at issue. If Mr. Jennings had looked further into Marx's writings, he would have seen that Marx made it perfectly clear that he was referring to the worker's position *relative* to that of the capitalist. Thus, on page 631 of the Glaiser edition he dealt with the increase in the workers' purchasing power and added:—

But just as little as better clothing, food, and treatment, and a larger peculium, do away with the exploitation of the slave, so little do they set aside that of the wage-worker.

Secondly, a moment's reflection should have shown Mr. Jennings that the workers can, as Marx explained, receive a larger amount of the necessities of life without receiving "a greater share of the wealth produced." ED. COMM.

CLASS AT HEAD OFFICE.

The following class is held at Head Office:

ECONOMICS. Wednesday evenings, 8 p.m.
The class is free and open to all.

HOW TO GET TO HEAD OFFICE.

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Contributions are earnestly invited to assist us with the expense of publishing more literature.

ACTIVITIES IN WEST HAM.

LABOUR PARTY SHIRKS DEBATES.

It is becoming increasingly evident that the districts of both West Ham and its eastern neighbour, East Ham, are not going to be such happy hunting grounds for the activities of the vote-catching political confidence tricksters as they have hitherto been. Slowly, but surely, the workers here are learning the real position. This encouraging state of affairs is mainly due to the efforts of the West Ham Branch. Our propaganda meetings have been held regularly throughout the season; outside Forest Gate Station, and at the corner of Kempton Road, East Ham, on Wednesday and Sunday evenings respectively.

So successful, indeed, have the meetings at the latter place been, that the branch members have decided to continue them throughout the winter, whenever the Clerk of the Weather is in a favourable mood. Another gratifying feature is the steady increase in the sale of the S.S. and pamphlets. Many newsagents here are now recognising that our paper is in demand and are giving prominence to the S.S. contents poster. There is every justification for the optimistic feeling that prevails concerning the growth of support for Socialism.

Already the local Labourites are getting anxious. For instance, in East Ham, we have made efforts to engage in public debate the two M.P.s for the district. But although Miss Susan Lawrence verbally agreed to "debate with anyone" on the subject, "Is the Labour Party worthy of the support of the working class?" and accepted the challenge made on behalf of the S.P.G.B., no reply was forthcoming when a letter was sent to the local Labour Party with the object of fixing up the details. Another letter, sent a few weeks after, was also ignored. In East Ham South the Labour Party have been more courteous. They, at any rate, did answer our letter, but they also shirked a public debate with a Socialist.

Their letter, dated October 4th, and signed by their Secretary, H. Restarick, East Ham South Divisional Labour Party, reads as follows:—

Dear Sir,—Replying to your letter of 29th ult., I fail to see what useful purpose would be served by Mr. Alfred Barnes,

M.P., engaging in public debate with a representative of the S.P.G.B.—Yours, etc.

Of course we are quite aware that no useful purpose would be served to the Labour Party, and are consequently not surprised at their avoiding such a debate. We should like to explain, however, that a very useful purpose could be served in showing an audience the difference between the organisations.

But the Labour Party have backed another loser by their attitude in this matter, for their refusal to debate and defend themselves is being used with effect by our local speakers.

Our readiness to discuss and defend our case is being rewarded by having large and orderly audiences. When we have gained the understanding and approval of our listeners, we of the West Ham Branch will be glad to sign them on at 167, Romford Road, where the branch meets every Thursday at 8 o'clock.

THE HAMMER.

THE WORKERS' SOCIALIST PARTY (U.S.A.).

Readers in the U.S.A. are invited to communicate with the Workers' Socialist Party of the United States, at 315, East 14th Street, New York City.

The Workers' Socialist Party are our agents in the U.S.A., and the "SOCIALIST STANDARD" is obtainable from them at the above address.

S.P.G.B. PROPAGANDA MEETINGS

LONDON DISTRICT.

Sunday ... Liverpool St., Walworth Rd., 11.30 a.m.
Clapham Common, 3 p.m.
Tottenham, West Green Corner, 11.30 a.m.
Victoria Park, 11.45 a.m.
Cock Hotel, East Ham, 7.30 p.m.
Paddington, Prince of Wales, 7.30 p.m.

Fill in and post to 42 Great Dover Street, London, S.E. 1, and get this paper regularly.

Please send me the "Socialist Standard" for 12 months, for which I enclose 2/6.

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BRANCH DIRECTORY.

- BATTERSEA**.—Sec., W. A. Devine, 2 Cupar-road, S.W.11. Branch meets Thursday, 8.30 p.m. at The Waiting Room, Latchmere Baths, entrance in Burns-road. Discussion second Thurs. in month.
- BECONTREE**.—Sec., Hy. Gratton, 4, Drummond Ave., Brooklands, Romford. Branch meets 1st and 3rd Wednesdays at 7.30, at above address.
- BIRMINGHAM**.—Sec., E. Jesper, 32, Rollason-rd., Erdington. Branch meets The Continental Cafe, Moor St., 1st and 3rd Sundays at 11 a.m.
- CENTRAL**.—Membership obtained only through the Ex. Committee. Applications to General Sec.
- EAST LONDON**.—Sec. W. Reynolds, 57, Weymouth Terrace, Hackney Rd. Branch meets every Friday at 8 p.m. at 141, Bow Road. Discussion after Branch business. Public invited.
- GLASGOW**.—Branch meets 2nd and 4th Fridays in month 8 p.m., at 113, Henderson Street, Glasgow, S.1. Sec., A. Shaw.
- HACKNEY**.—Branch meets Arcadian Cafe, 42, Amherst Road, Hackney, 1st and 3rd Fridays in month, 8 p.m., Discussions 9.30. Communication to Sec. at 21 Bridge Street, Homerton, E. 9.
- HULL**.—Branch meets 1st and 3rd Wednesdays in month at 15, Grosvenor Street, Beverley Road. Communications to M. V. Coupland at above address.
- ISLINGTON**.—Branch meets Wednesdays, 8.30, at 144, Seven Sisters-rd., Holloway, N. Communications to that address.
- LEYTON**.—Branch meets 8 p.m., Trades and Labour Hall, Grove House, High-rd., second Mondays in month.
- MANCHESTER**.—Sec., W. Addison. Branch meets 2nd and 4th Mondays in month at 8.15 p.m. at Room 2, 183 Oxford Road, All Saints.
- PADDINGTON**.—Branch meeting held on 2nd and 4th Fridays, 8 p.m., in room above the Co-operative Stores, 306, Kilburn Lane, W.9 (side door).
- SHEFFIELD**.—Branch meets 2nd and 4th Wednesdays 7.30 p.m., Room 5, Trades Hall, Charles Street. Public discussion after business. Secretary E. Boden, 74, Glenalmond Road.
- SOUTHEND-ON-SEA**.—Sec., J. Bird, 5, Welling-ton-avenue, Westclife-on-Sea.
- SOUTHWARK**.—Branch meets Fridays at 8 p.m., 42, Great Dover Street, S.E.1. Communications to Sec., at above address.
- TOOTING**.—Branch meets on the 2nd and 4th Thursday in the month at the Tooting Adult School, 971, Garratt Lane, S.W.17. Sec. (pro-tem), H. E. Hutchins, 174, Haydon's Road, South Wimbledon, S.W. 19.
- TOTTENHAM**.—Secretary, 18, Woodlands Park Rd., N.15. Branch meets 1st and 3rd Fridays each month, Room 2, Trades Hall, 7, Bruce Grove, Discussion after branch business. Public invited.
- WALTHAMSTOW**.—Sec. S. E. Williams, 64, Bloxhall-rd., Leyton, E.10. Branch meets at Workmen's Hall, High-st., every Monday.
- WATFORD**.—A. Lawson, Sec., 107, Kensington-avenue, Watford. Branch meets Mondays at 8.30 p.m. at Secretary's address.
- WEST HAM**.—Branch meets Thursdays at 8 p.m. at 167, Romford-rd., Stratford. Sec., P. Hallard, 22, Colegrave-rd., Stratford, E.

WOOD GREEN.—All communications to Sec., F. W. Godfrey, 71, Falkland Road, N. 8. Branch meets 2nd 2nd and 4th Wednesday in month at 8.30 p.m. at Stirling House, Stuart Crescent.

THE SOCIALIST PARTY OF GREAT BRITAIN.

OBJECT.—The establishment of a system of society based upon the common ownership and democratic control of the means and instruments for producing and distributing wealth by and in the interests of the whole community.

DECLARATION OF PRINCIPLES.

THE SOCIALIST PARTY of Great HOLDS— Britain

That society as at present constituted is based upon the ownership of the means of living (i.e., lands, factories, railways, etc.) by the capitalist or master class, and the consequent enslavement of the working class by whose labour alone wealth is produced.

That in society, therefore, there is an antagonism of interests, manifesting itself as a class struggle, between those who possess but do not produce and those who produce but do not possess.

That this antagonism can be abolished only by the emancipation of the working class from the domination of the master class, by the conversion into the common property of society of the means of production and distribution, and their democratic control by the whole people.

That as in the order of social evolution the working class is the last class to achieve its freedom, the emancipation of the working class will involve the emancipation of all mankind, without distinction of race or sex.

That this emancipation must be the work of the working class itself.

That as the machinery of government, including the armed forces of the nation, exists only to conserve the monopoly by the capitalist class of the wealth taken from the workers, the working class must organise consciously and politically for the conquest of the powers of government, national and local, in order that this machinery, including these forces, may be converted from an instrument of oppression into the agent of emancipation and the overthrow of privilege, aristocratic and plutocratic.

That as political parties are but the expression of class interests, and as the interest of the working class is diametrically opposed to the interests of all sections of the master class, the party seeking working-class emancipation must be hostile to every other party.

THE SOCIALIST PARTY of Great Britain, therefore, enters the field of political action determined to wage war against all other political parties, whether alleged labour or avowedly capitalist, and calls upon the members of the working class of this country to muster under its banner to the end that a speedy termination may be wrought to the system which deprives them of the fruits of their labour, and that poverty may give place to comfort, privilege to equality, and slavery to freedom.

Those agreeing with the above principles and desiring enrolment in the Party should apply for membership form to secretary of nearest branch or at Head Office.

THE Socialist Standard

The Official Organ of **THE SOCIALIST PARTY** of Great Britain.

No. 319. Vol. 27.]

LONDON, MARCH, 1931

[MONTHLY, TWOPENCE.]

THE CASE AGAINST THE 'LIVING WAGE.'

MAXTON'S CURIOUS MIXTURE.

On February 6th, Mr. Maxton, on behalf of the Independent Labour Party, introduced into the House of Commons a Living Wage Bill.

The Living Wage, as defined in the Bill, "means a wage at least sufficient to meet the normal needs of the average worker regarded as a human being living in a civilised community, including the satisfaction of reasonable minimum requirements of health and efficiency and of cultural life and the provision of reasonable rest and recreation."

The amount of this living wage is to be determined by a Committee, appointed by the Board of Trade, "and which shall include among its members at least three working housewives, three representatives of trade unions, and three representatives of co-operative societies."

The Committee is to take into account "actual retail prices and other costs of living," in addition to various other factors, and is to review the wage at least once a year.

The wage is then to be made obligatory on Government departments, local authorities, Government contractors, and finally on all industries. That is to say, no industry may pay less than this minimum. Should any industry not be able to afford the wage, a body called the "National Industrial Re-organisation Commission" is to have power to re-organise the industry.

THE I.L.P.'s MAIN PLANK.

Mr. Maxton explained in his House of Commons speech that the living wage proposals are the basis upon which the whole programme of the I.L.P. is built up. The

programme includes many items, from increased pensions and increased unemployment pay, to nationalisation of the banks and the principal industries, and State control of the import and export trade; but "this proposal for a living wage is a pivotal proposal round which all the others are arranged."

Miss Jennie Lee, M.P., whose name also appears on the Bill, went further and admitted that the "pivotal proposal" cannot be applied without the other proposals also being applied. She said:—

I do not pretend that this Bill could be carried into effect without great stress and great difficulties in the country. I believe that it would mean that we should have to go in for controlled prices, and once we got on to controlled prices we shall have to control the banking system.

Let us now examine the theory behind the Living Wage Bill and ask ourselves whether its effects will be worth the time and trouble necessary to apply it. Is it worth the "great stress and great difficulties," together with all the further measures which Miss Lee admits are necessary?

WHAT IS A LIVING WAGE?

The backers of the Bill claim to have defined a living wage. But have they? What are "normal needs"? What is an "average worker regarded as a human being"? What are the "reasonable requirements of a civilised community"? What amount of rest and recreation are "reasonable"?

The employers regard as "reasonable" any wage which makes the worker an efficient producer of profits. Hundreds of thousands of workers in the cotton mills,

on the railways, in the Civil Service and Post Office, on the land and in the mines, are getting well under 40s. for a full week's work. Miss Dorothy Evans, Secretary of the Association of Women Clerks, is reported in the *Daily Herald* (February 19th) as stating that women clerks in the Civil Service, 21 years of age, are paid as little as 24s. 7d. in the provinces and 31s. in London. The *Daily Herald* on February 17th reported that the pay of farm workers in Suffolk had just been reduced from 30s. to 28s. a week.

This last case is of special interest because agricultural workers already have their "living wage" fixed by law! The Agricultural Wages Act, 1924, passed by the Labour Government (which the I.L.P. claimed was an essentially I.L.P. Government) lays it down that the minimum wage paid to an able-bodied agricultural worker shall be

adequate to promote efficiency and to enable a man in an ordinary case to maintain himself and his family in accordance with such standard of comfort as may be reasonable in relation to the nature of his occupation.

Translated into hard cash, this means 28s. or 30s. a week!

All Mr. Maxton proposes to do, in effect, is to substitute his nebulous phrase for the nebulous phrase in the above Act, and apply it all round.

EMPLOYERS TO FIX THE WAGE.

The Bill provides that the wage shall be fixed by a Committee including working women, trade unionists and co-operative society representatives.

The Bill does not say how many persons the Committee shall consist of, nor does it say what other interests are to be represented. It is, however, to include employers.

When the seconder, Mr. Kirkwood, M.P., was asked if employers are to be excluded, he replied, "They are not excluded" (*Hansard*, February 6th, col. 2297).

So we have this extraordinary position put up by a so-called working-class party, the I.L.P., that they want the employing class to have a hand in fixing what is a living wage for the workers whom they exploit!

It will be noticed, also, that the co-operative societies are expressly brought in. Why? Does it need legislation to allow the co-operative societies to pay their own employees a living wage? The co-operative societies constantly have strikes and lock-

outs in their concerns, and have on several occasions been charged by their employees with paying less even than the standard rates of pay. Within the past few months there has been a strike of co-operative employees—the insurance agents. Yet the I.L.P. wants the co-operative societies, with their characteristic petty employer's outlook, to sit with other employers on the Living Wage Committee. The extent to which the co-operative societies exploit the workers in their employ is shown by the amount of wages and the amount of profits. The retail distributive societies in 1929 (see *New Leader*, February 6th) paid an average amount of £130 during the year to its wage-earning and salaried staff. The surplus left after meeting all trading expenses was over £22 million pounds, equal to a further £148 per head of the staff of 176,000. They could double the wages of their workers and still have a surplus. Why does not Mr. Maxton start his living wage campaign among his friends, the co-operators?

Another important point emerges from the composition of the Living Wage Committee. It is usual on committees of this kind for the Government to appoint equal numbers of workers' and employers' representatives, together with some so-called "neutral" members representing the Government. Seeing that the Labour Government during their present term of office have appointed at least two wage committees which have recommended lower wages, it certainly cannot be assumed that Labour Government representatives on a Living Wage Committee would press for a wage higher than present wages. On the other hand, the co-operators who would be there to look after their own interests as employers are regarded by Mr. Maxton as being on the workers' side. So that in fact the Living Wage Committee will be dominated by employers.

LIVING WAGE OR LOWER WAGE?

How much will the minimum wage be? We are given some indication that it will actually be lower than the present average wage of industrial workers.

Miss Eleanor Rathbone, M.P., the enthusiast for lower wages by means of family allowances, gave her conditional blessing to the Bill, but wanted to be assured that the wage would not be enough to keep a family, but only enough to keep a man and wife. Miss Jennie Lee, M.P., gave the

desired assurance (*Hansard*, February 6th, col. 2313). The effect of this is obvious, and it is the effect which Miss Rathbone makes no secret of desiring. It would mean that all unmarried and childless workers would be paid less than the standard rate of wages—to the benefit of the employing class, who would get a supply of cheaper labour. In view of the composition of the Committee, the "living wage" might well be below the present average wage of industrial workers.

THE AUSTRALIAN MODEL.

A memorandum attached to the Bill refers to the Australian attempts to fix and apply a "living wage." The reference is interesting, because it gives a practical illustration of the futility of the whole scheme. In Australia a "living wage" was fixed before the war, and the scheme has had a run of about twenty years.

Mr. Maxton claims for the living wage proposal that it would permanently raise the standard of living of the workers, and be a definite step towards Socialism. Australian experience shows that it does neither.

In the Australian Senate, on November 14th, 1930, Senator Daly, for the Government, gave the information that, after allowing for the increase in unemployment and the increase in prices, the average real wage in 1929-30 was almost exactly the same as it was in 1911-12. Then in January of this year the Arbitration Court ordered a reduction of 10 per cent. in the basic wage (see *Daily Telegraph*, January 23rd). This reduction is quite separate from the regular adjustments for alterations in the cost of living. So that after twenty years of "living wageism" the Australian workers are now 10 per cent. worse off than when they started, and are not one iota nearer to Socialism than they were then. That is how capitalism has worked havoc with all the pretty but false theories of the Australian reformers of capitalism. Capitalism here would quickly falsify every one of the flashy promises of the I.L.P.

CAPITALISM AND WAGES.

The living wage scheme is as full of holes as a sieve. Every attempt to fix a statutory wage has run up against the snag of unemployment. If the living wage is not higher than the existing one, it is useless. If it is higher, it will give the employers

an added inducement to instal labour-saving machinery and thus increase unemployment. This tendency to instal machines operates in agriculture to-day, in spite of the low level of wages fixed by the Wages Committees.

How is the living wage to be enforced? Anyone who has seen at close hand the operation of the Agricultural Wages Act knows that in many districts the minimum rates are largely ignored. The men prefer to take less than the minimum rather than lose their employment. What remedy has the I.L.P. to offer for that? What will it do with the older men and those not up to the average standard of fitness who will be sacked to make way for young and fit workers?

It is no answer to say that the I.L.P. also proposes to nationalise various industries. State capitalism, as applied in the Post Office, leaves the worker subject to practically all of the forces which face him in private capitalist concerns. The process of selection and throwing out the less fit men and women goes on in the Post Office as on the land and in the mines and elsewhere, although in the Post Office the method of securing the same end is slightly different. The workers in State industries suffer the additional disadvantage that they cannot seek similar employment with a different employer.

PATCHING UP CAPITALISM.

And what justification can the I.L.P. offer for a proposal which in effect is patching up the capitalist system? Mr. Maxton expected that criticism and tried to forestall it. In an interview given to the *New Leader* (February 6th) he said:—

I admit that the old method of approaching the living wage problem would be correctly described as patching up capitalism. . . . Our approach is fundamentally different.

This, incidentally, is an admission that the I.L.P.'s past policy for most of the period of the party's existence has been a policy of patching up capitalism, as indeed was avowed by Mr. Wheatley in reference to the Housing Act he introduced as Minister of Health in the 1924 Labour Government.

The only difference Mr. Maxton could point to was that the present scheme is not based on what any particular industry can afford to pay, but on what the "nation" can afford. This is a distinction without

a difference. The two schemes have precisely the same fundamental defect that they leave the capitalist system intact, and leave the capitalist class in ownership and control of the means of life. Does Mr. Maxton think that the capitalist class as a body will show a different attitude towards the wages question because they are approached nationally instead of industrially? He gives his own answer when he quotes Civil Servants as being people who are already "guaranteed a minimum wage" and whose good fortune he wishes to extend to other workers. Thousands of Civil Servants—adults working a full week—receive less than 40s. Yet influential bodies of employers constantly complain that the levels of pay in the Civil Service are too high and should be reduced. A demand has just been made to the Government by an employers' association, that Civil Service wages should be reduced to the level of the depressed export trades (see *Times*, February 20th). A postman, aged 32, charged with theft at Kingston, on February 21st, was receiving 49s. 1d. per week. Out of this he had to keep a wife and two children and was paying 27s. 6d. a week rent (*Evening News*, February 21st). Mr. Maxton is a supporter of State capitalism as it exists in the Post Office, and wants to solve the workers' problems by extending that system.

SOCIALISM THE ONLY REMEDY.

The only solution for the economic problems of the workers is Socialism. Chasing after the endless revivals of old fallacies evolved by the perverted ingenuity of the I.L.P. has brought them no lasting advantage. It has diverted their attention from things that really matter and has left them as far as ever from achieving Socialism.

Even as regards making the best of capitalism, the living wage scheme is an illusion. It is no substitute for trade unionism—Mr. Maxton admits that—it is not an improvement on trade unionism, and it is open to serious objections from which the former is free. In Australia the 10 per cent. reduction in the basic wage, referred to above, has taken place in spite of a Labour Federal Government. Resistance to the award of the Arbitration Court set up by the Australian Maxtons devolves upon the trade unions.

A measure of the irresponsibility of the

I.L.P. is provided by the speech of Mr. David Kirkwood, seconding the Bill. He was asked from what source any higher wage would come. Instead of replying that an increase in the wages of the workers would be at the expense of the employers' profits, he informed an amused House of Commons that wealth can be created without limit merely by printing more bank notes.

It does not seem to have occurred to Messrs. Maxton and Kirkwood that if their money theory is sound, it is a sheer waste of time and trouble to print bank notes at all. Why not issue free blanks to the workers and let them write their own bank notes? Or, better still, solve the street litter problem by presenting used-up bus tickets over the counter in payment for goods?

It was a curious but appropriate coincidence that on the day of Mr. Kirkwood's speech a very similar purveyor of quack nostrums—a German who collected money on the strength of a claim that he knew how to create gold out of base metals—was sentenced to a longish term of imprisonment. Political quacks who trade on the ignorance and trustfulness of the working class suffer no such penalties.

H.

Sunday Evening Lectures.

Head Office: 42 Gt. Dover Street, S.E.

- | | |
|-----------------------------------|-------------|
| March 1st | J. Callis |
| 'The Inevitability of Socialism.' | |
| March 8th | Gilmac |
| 'The First Reform Bill.' | |
| March 15th | A. Kohn |
| 'Paris Commune and Its Lessons.' | |
| March 22nd | R. Thompson |
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A DIARY OF LABOUR GOVERNMENT.

Here in Great Britain, about twenty-seven years ago, there was a sharp difference of opinion. There were those who held that there was but one cause of working-class poverty, and one only, and but one way to end it. These formed the Socialist Party of Great Britain, with the aim and object of capturing political power and achieving Socialism. There were others who denounced this as a dream, too far removed from present needs to be practicable. What was wanted, they said, was something now, something tangible, something realisable, something which we could see in our time. These supported immediate reforms, palliatives, and the Labour Party. They have been wonderfully fortunate. In a mere twenty-five years they have achieved their practical object and seated a Labour Government in Parliament. That Government has been there nearly two years, and we think we may be doing posterity a service by setting down a rough diary of what life for the workers means under a Labour Government. Something now was their object; this is the something.

On January 1st, 1931, two and a half millions of working men were unable to find a master. On this day, also, 161,300 miners were locked out in South Wales.

On January 2nd the railways of the country announced they contemplated spending £30,000,000 on improvements. Meanwhile, they were negotiating with their employees to slice £11,000,000 off their wages.

About this time, some thousands of cotton workers were locked out because they protested against an intensification of their work, and more thousands of boot and shoe operatives and agricultural workers were threatened with wage cuts. Labour was still in power.

A man named Lansbury, a high Labour official, wrote to the Press suggesting that what was really needed was more prayers and Christian spirit.

A feeble-witted Christian, known as Jix, hurried to assure the people that Mr. Lansbury was quite wrong, and that Christianity had nothing to do with politics.

On January 12th the *Daily Herald*, Labour's own newspaper, announced that "business men realised that the *Daily Herald* is a magnificent business-building power."

On January 13th the papers announced that 27,000 tinsplate workers were to be thrown out of work. Labour was still in power.

On January 16th, such was the poverty of the nation, ground down with the burden of taxation, and such the need for national economy, that the two Royal Princes started out with a shipload of accessories on an 18,000 miles tour.

January 19th.—The official attack on the railwaymen opened. Official figures of unemployed, 2,608,406. Labour still in power.

January 20th.—Miss Ellen Wilkinson, one of the Labour Government, hard at work solving the workers' problems by touring America, writes that she is astonished at the bread-lines in New York. What says the Bible: "The fool has his eyes on the ends of the earth."

Speaking of the Bible recalls that on January 20th an article in the *News-Chronicle* records the appalling poverty of the clergy. It seems that their average salary is only £350 per annum—nearly £7 per week. How do they live, poor men? The railway companies suggest 38s. per week for their rapacious hirelings. Yes! Labour is still in power.

There was a tremendous happening about this time. The Labour Government was defeated. In the midst of this poverty, unemployment and slaughter of working-class wages, they made a determined stand on one phase of the question of religion in schools. The Roman Catholics, perhaps the most fanatical opposers of Socialism in existence, represented that the Government's Education Bill would cost them £1,000,000, and wanted a guarantee that it would not come out of their own pockets. Labour members rallied to the Catholic standard and defeated their own Government by 33 votes. Did the Government resign? Of course not; they must continue the good work of getting something now.

January 20th.—Ramsay MacDonald (*re* Princess Royal) "moved a humble address to assure His Majesty that this House will ever participate with the most affectionate and dutiful attachment in whatever may concern the feelings and interests of His Majesty."

January 23rd.—Another determined stand made on the Trades Disputes Bill. The great question was, whether the Labour Party shall have the power to grab the

coppers of uninterested trade unionists or not. A Second Reading was obtained with a majority of 27. They breathe again. The poor remained poor, the unemployed remained workless, and the victims of wage cuts remained cut. The Labour Government was still in office.

On January 26th the Labour Government, friends of the poor, the downtrodden and the helpless, released an agitator named Gandhi (whom they had held in prison very much like Capitalist Governments do), but overlooked 60,000 of his pals who had been awaiting trial since May 5th.

January 30th.—Whitehaven pit disaster; 26 miners killed. The *News-Chronicle* suggests, in view of frequent mishaps at this pit, that an enquiry be instituted. They are twenty years late. We commented upon a worse happening in the same pit as long ago as that. Those in favour of "something now," please note.

Just to wind up the month, on January 31st Mr. Graham indicated (according to the *News-Chronicle*) that the Government accepted the Liberal proposals for unemployment. He is credited with saying: "The simple truth is that the industrial problem is now so grave that the old division of parties becomes meaningless." An equally simple truth is that the old division referred to has never been more than simple eyewash. Mr. Graham is thirty years behind the times. He should give his newsagent an order for the regular delivery of THE SOCIALIST STANDARD.

However, this has not been an entirely dull month. There were 300 guests at the Hunt Ball held at Newnham Abbey, and Lady Houston offered £100,000 so that Great Britain should be able to compete for the Schneider Cup. She gave this to implement her belief that one Englishman was still worth three foreigners. Our engineers—also worth three foreigners—were told that their wages—average 58s. 1½d.—were too high, and would have to come down to a level that would enable us to beat the foreigner. No! not altogether a dull month. The poor remain poor, the unemployed remain workless, and wage cuts are as regular as a bacon-slicer.

Of course, space is too precious in our little STANDARD for diaries of this description, but—unless one takes a tragic view of poverty and unemployment—they can be quite amusing. For instance, on February 3rd the House of Commons engrossed itself

in the Representation of the People Bill. The question of the City of London retaining special representation was discussed. Mr. Clynes, a Labour man, said "it was inconceivable that it should not be represented in the House."

Inconceivable, mark you! Those who are still looking for "something now" will be relieved to hear that under the heading, "Business Done," for this day appears "A Bill for the better protection of trout in Scotland, read a first time." No doubt this is the Bill that caused a drop of 27,000 in the unemployed this week. On February 4th it was stated there were only 2,592,650 without a master in the week ending January 26th. This was before the Trout Bill was passed.

On February 5th Mr. Lansbury, ever practical, ever a realist, brought us back to the facts of working-class life by intimating that he had finally approved of the Haig statue. The Engineering Employers, somewhat more out of touch with reality, delivered their ultimatum to their workers, worsening hours, wages and conditions, and threatening "if you or your members fail to make your contribution . . . to take what steps they consider necessary."

"Something now" is a curious policy, isn't it! Why not try the other way? Socialism, next year, if we can't get it before, but—*nothing less!* W. T. H.

THE 27th ANNUAL PARTY CONFERENCE

WILL BE HELD ON

Friday and Saturday, April 3rd and 4th,
FAIRFAX HALL,
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Apply early for Tickets.

HANLEY (STAFFS.).

Will readers and sympathisers in the Hanley district who are willing to help re-form the Hanley Branch communicate with C. COOKE, 64, Sydney Street, Hanley.

PITY THE POOR CAPITALIST.

The *Economist* newspaper's index of profits, based upon the accounts of 1,932 concerns, shows that the net profit, after payment of debenture interest, etc., was practically the same in 1929 and 1930, the respective totals being £198,800,000 and £197,500,000. The decline is only 0.6 per cent. (See Supplement, Feb. 14th, 1931.)

The rate of dividend on preference capital was slightly higher than in 1929 (5.7 per cent., as against 5.5 per cent.), while the average dividend on ordinary capital was lower (9.5 per cent., as against 10.5 per cent.).

The rates for the past ten years, and for five years before the war, are given below:

1909	...	4.3	...	6.3
1910	...	4.5	...	7.0
1911	...	4.9	...	8.5
1912	...	5.2	...	8.5
1913	...	5.1	...	10.2
1920	...	5.0	...	12.6
1921	...	5.2	...	10.2
1922	...	5.2	...	8.4
1923	...	5.3	...	9.3
1924	...	5.4	...	9.8
1925	...	5.5	...	10.3
1926	...	5.4	...	11.1
1927	...	5.3	...	10.8
1928	...	5.4	...	10.6
1929	...	5.5	...	10.5
1930	...	5.7	...	9.5

The *Manchester Guardian* (January 6th) published a list of profits of about 240 "important public companies." More than half of them made higher profits in 1930 than in 1929, and the total profits in 1930 of all the companies (after deducting losses) amounted to over £8 million more than in 1929.

The *Times* published a summary of the profits of 176 British industrial concerns, "showing the broad tendency of profits in British industry as a whole."

The average dividends in 1930 represented 8.4 per cent. of the paid-up capital, as compared with 8.2 per cent. in 1929. (See *The Times Annual Financial Review*, February 10th, 1931.)

The *Banker's Magazine* Index of the market values of 365 securities shows that in December, 1930, the average value, while about 5 per cent. less than in December, 1929, was still 16.8 per cent. above the level of December, 1921. (See *Economist* monthly supplement, January 24th, 1931.) H.

WHAT IS CAPITAL?

Capital is that part of wealth that is used to make a profit.

In order to produce commodities (that is, articles for sale) certain things are needed besides the worker's labour-power. These are land, factory buildings, and machinery, motive power, in the form of steam, gas, or electricity, and raw materials. If the articles are chairs, then the raw materials required are wood and wire, canvas and cloth and many other things. Also the tools the workmen use, the motor lorries in which they deliver the goods, the typewriters and telephones and other office equipment. Now the money invested in all these things is capital, because they are used to make a profit for the owners. Even the money spent as wages paid to the workers, is capital, because it is paid with the idea of making profit for the employer.

Under Socialism, chairs and other useful articles will still be required. But as there will be no profit-making, no capital will be needed, either as wages or in any other way. The raw materials and machinery of production will be used by all who are able to work. There will be no propertied class of idlers. Society will produce goods for use, not for sale and profit-making.

J. E. ROE.

BERMONDSEY.

MEETINGS

will be held at

BERMONDSEY PUBLIC LIBRARY
(Small Hall),

SPA ROAD, BERMONDSEY,

at 8 p.m. on

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 11th.

Speaker: **E. Hardy.**

Subject:

'An Alternative to Labour Government.'

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 25th.

Speaker and Subject to be announced.

Doors open 7.30 p.m. Admission free.
Non-members invited. Questions and Discussion.

BIRMINGHAM.

Sympathisers in the Birmingham area, who would be willing to help strengthen the branch there, are asked to communicate with the General Secretary at Head Office.

OFFICIAL NOTICE.

All communications for the Executive Committee, Subscriptions for the *SOCIALIST STANDARD*, Articles, and Correspondence submitted for insertion therein, should be addressed—The Socialist Party of Great Britain, 42, Great Dover Street, London, S.E.1, to whom Money Orders should be made payable.

The meetings of the Executive Committee are held at the Head Office, every Tuesday, at 7.30 p.m.

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The Socialist Standard,

MARCH



1931

**THE LABOUR PARTY'S
THIRTY-ONE YEARS.****WORKERS WORSE OFF.**

The Labour Party was formally constituted under its present title in February, 1906, after the General Election at which twenty-nine Labour M.P.'s were returned. Six years earlier the Labour Party's predecessor, the Labour Representation Committee, was formed. The Independent Labour Party, which was largely instrumental in bringing about the later developments, was formed in 1893—nearly forty years ago.

All three bodies were based on the same general set of ideas. They rejected the possibility of winning over the workers to Socialism by the direct method of preaching clear-cut Socialist principles, and based their hopes on the policy of winning support by the indirect method of social reforms. They argued, not without some show of reason, that the workers were interested in day-to-day issues containing the promise of immediate advantage, and were not interested in the broad question of the organisation of society. Those who retorted that the job must be tackled of changing the workers' outlook were pushed aside. They

were told that practical work would prove far more effective than mere criticism of capitalism and preaching of Socialism. The Socialist Party of Great Britain was a voice crying in the wilderness. Our warning that capitalism would frustrate all the practical work as fast or faster than it could be achieved, and still leave Socialism unattained, was ignored or derided. Now that thirty-one years have passed and the Labour Party has twice been in office, it is opportune to look back and judge of the truth of our criticism. How have the facts treated the Labour Party's theory?

Are the workers better off? Have they improved their position relatively to that of the capitalist class? Is life more leisurely for them and more secure? Have extremes of wealth and poverty been abolished? And, a last question, are we nearer to Socialism?

Speaking broadly, all of these questions must be answered in the negative. We have had reforms innumerable; Liberal reforms backed by the Labour Party; Tory reforms; and Labour reforms backed by Liberals. The political wheel has gone full circle. A Labour Party once subordinate to the Liberals has won to power, and now it is Mr. Lloyd George who must go each week to 10, Downing Street, for consultations on the joint Liberal-Labour policy.

But the enactment of reforms has been like pouring water into a leaky bucket. Nearly every additional expenditure by the Government on social reforms to remedy some pressing working-class evil has helped to lower the workers' cost of living. What the workers have received in the shape of sick benefit, unemployed pay, etc., has been used by the employers as an excuse—admitted or unadmitted—for seeking to reduce wages. What has been gained at great effort in one direction has been wholly or partly taken away in another. As the Liberal economist, Professor Clay, admits in his book, "The Problem of Industrial Relations," the increase in expenditure on social services has not been a clear addition to wages, but "has followed and to a large extent compensated for, the check to the rise in real wages . . . about the end of last century" (p. 249).

Up to about 1897 the purchasing power of the workers' wages was rising. Since that date real wages have fallen. Against social services, therefore, must be set the decline in real wages and the increase in unemployment.

Professor Clay admits that from 1895 to 1913 prices were rising more rapidly than wage rates, in spite of "a rapid increase in the country's wealth" (*ibid.*, p. 242).

Professor Pigou, writing in the *Economic Journal* for June, 1923, said:—

The rate of real wages actually declined between the later 'nineties and the outbreak of the Great War.

The Labour Research Department (this is not a Labour Party organisation) made an attempt to compare real wages in the years from 1900 to 1928.

Their estimate was based on official figures, and allowed for unemployment and for changes in the cost of living. It showed that in 1928 the industrial workers were about 6 per cent. worse off than in 1900 and about 5 per cent. worse off than in 1914. (See *L.R.D. Bulletin*, January, 1929.)

The Labour Party's own Research Department made a similar inquiry (see *Labour Bulletin*, June, 1929). They found that real wages, after allowing for changes in prices and in the amount of unemployment, were in 1928 practically the same as in 1914, but slightly less (1.6 per cent.) than in 1900. Since 1928, according to recent issues of the *Labour Bulletin*, real wages have fallen 3 per cent. or 4 per cent. They have continued to fall since the Labour Government came into office.

We do not claim for any of the estimates quoted above that they are more than approximate. The subject does not permit of absolute precision. They are sufficient, however, to indicate the trend of wages.

What we emphatically must say is that nothing has been achieved by the reform parties in the past thirty or forty years in any way commensurate with the vast expenditure of energy by two generations of enthusiastic supporters of the Labour Party. We do not believe that those who joined the Labour Party would have toiled for 31 years if they had realised then what small and uncertain results would come from their efforts. Would they have been so confident of the soundness of their policy if they could have foreseen that after all their labours the proportion of the national income received by the wage-earners would fall from 47.4 per cent. before the war to 45 per cent. to-day? That is the admission of the *Daily Herald* in its editorial on February 13th.

And none of the hardly won reforms are certain gains. A period of acute unemploy-

ment like the present, accompanied by wage reductions, may in a few months wipe out the savings of a lifetime and destroy the wage standards defended by years of effort.

Then, in the midst of the hard struggle of the workers, Mr. Philip Snowden, Chancellor of the Exchequer, announces that we must all be prepared for sacrifices: "The sacrifice the workers might have to make would be a temporary suspension in schemes of social development." (Report in *Daily Herald*, February 18th.)

The Labour Party believed in reforming capitalism, but finds when in power that those very capitalist evils which the reforms were to solve, themselves make further reforms impossible at the very time when the evils are greatest. What a fate for a thirty-years-old movement!!

We prophesy that the Party which rose to power by exploiting the discontent arising from the effects of capitalism, and which undertook to deal with those effects, will be hoist with its own petard. Discontent made the Party. Sooner or later discontent will break it. Already Mosley and others have broken away.

The Socialist policy of tackling the cause of working class poverty, and abolishing the capitalist system of society, was unassailable in 1900 and is still the only way out for the working class.

SHEFFIELD.**A MEETING**

will be held on

Wednesday, March 25th, at 7.30 p.m.

in the

TRADES HALL (ROOM 5),
CHARLES STREET.

Speaker

J. Horner.

Subject:

"Socialism and Industrial Action."

Non-members invited.

Admission Free.

Questions and Discussion.

HOW TO GET TO HEAD OFFICE.

Great Dover Street is a turning out of Borough High Street, near Borough (Underground) Station. The station is on the line from Morden to Hampstead and Highgate, and lies between the Bank Station and Elephant and Castle.

HOW THE FASCISTS GAINED POWER.

In the February issue we made the statement that Mussolini came into power because, and only because, he had been placed in control of the armed forces through having behind him a Parliamentary majority. The importance of the question is that we hold the same opinion as Marx on the necessity of the workers obtaining control of the machinery of government before they can establish Socialism. We also hold Marx's view that the vote will give that control. Two other theories—both held by the Communists and both dangerously impracticable—are that the workers can gain that control without the vote, i.e., by armed force, or, alternatively, that they can set up their own machinery of government in opposition to the capitalist State. The two views converge, because in practice the capitalist class, controlling the armed forces through their Parliamentary majority, will see to it that no rival armed force ever comes into being to challenge their supremacy.

Communists, anarchists, and our own queer tribe of imitators of the Italian black shirts are credulous enough to take Mussolini at his own face-value and to believe his stories about his great march on Rome in 1922.

We have received a letter from Mr. A. T. Rogers, an anarchist, telling us that our statement about Mussolini is a "thumping lie."

He quotes another anarchist, R. Rocker, as follows:—

When on August 30th, 1920, the employees of the factory "Romeo," in Milan, reported for work, they found the gates locked and guarded by the military. This was the signal for the workers to assume charge of the factories and mills. Within a few days over 600 establishments were in the hands of the workers. In various towns, particularly in Rome, tenants refused to pay rent. To relieve congestion in the homes of the workers, etc., rich villas, mansions, etc., were requisitioned for use without the Government daring to interfere. In the province of Palermo peasants invested large estates of the great landowners and distributed the acres among the village corporations. Similar action was taken throughout Sicily and Southern Italy. What effect this movement had upon the Italian Government can be judged by the statement later made in Parliament by Giolitti. Replying to the charge that his Government had failed to act energetically in the matter, the Italian Premier declared "What could I do? Invest the industries by the army? But in Milan alone 600 mills and factories were in possession

of the workers. I should have had to use the whole army to dispossess them, and then I would have had no more soldiers to keep the masses in check outside on the streets. Had we resorted to violence, and mobilised the whole army, the Imperial Guard and the carabinieri against the 500,000 workmen, then my critics know very well what it would have led to."

Mr. Rogers claims that the passage he quotes proves conclusively that the Parliamentary majority "was utterly and helplessly impotent till the Socialists had stabbed the workers in the back by secretly conniving with Giolitti."

It is, in fact, quite true that Giolitti's Government in 1920 did not at first take open action against the workers who had "occupied" the factories. What Mr. Rogers evidently does not know is that Giolitti and the friends whose interests he was looking after did not want the workers turned out. That and not "impotence" was the reason for Giolitti's temporary inactivity.

The whole story was told by the correspondent in Italy of the *New York Nation* (8th March, 1922).

The Peronne Brothers, proprietors of the Ansaldo Iron and Steel Company, found themselves, after the war, in increasing financial difficulties. They and associated firms were opposed by the Banca Commerciale and Giolitti's Government. Peronnes were tricked into resisting the demands of their workers by promises of support from the whole body of manufacturers. The occupation of the factories by the workers was not, as has been alleged, the first step in an attempted revolution, but was merely a tactical move in an industrial dispute. But when it had begun, Peronnes' rivals made concessions to their own workers, and got Giolitti's Government to delay taking action to help Peronnes, who were, moreover, in such financial difficulties that they could not afford to pay the higher wages demanded.

The delay in taking action was, therefore, deliberate, and was a move in a conflict between rival capitalist interests. It was contrived for the purpose of damaging Peronnes. Where, and as soon as the Italian Government wanted to take action it took it fast enough, and drastically enough. The following is a report from the *SOCIALIST* (April 22nd, 1920). It is interesting to remember that the *SOCIALIST*, and the Party whose organ it was—the British Socialist Labour Party—were themselves enthusiastic supporters of that particular

piece of tomfoolery, the idea that unarmed workers can defy the armed forces of the State.

At Novara one worker was shot and many wounded by the troops. The Royal Guards were "operating" against the strikers. At Brescia the strike continues. One striker has been killed by the troops. The strike committee of 25 has been arrested. In Turin and Naples the workers invaded the factories from which they had been locked out, formed soviets, and proceeded to work as usual. They were not allowed to work in peace for long. Government troops were sent to storm the buildings. The factory at Turin was the famous F.I.A.T. automobile works. One worker was killed at Naples.

So much for the occupation of the factories in 1920.

But the real point of our original statement was not merely the events in 1920, but the way in which the Fascists came to eventual power in 1922. We say that the deciding factor was the possession of the machinery of government, vested in Capitalist representatives by the democratic vote of the electors. Mr. Rogers says we err. Let us quote four Italian witnesses, a trade union official, a Communist, a Liberal and a member of the "Socialist Party of Italy."

Ludovico D'Arragona, Secretary of the Italian General Confederation of Labour, writing in the *Labour Magazine* (February, 1923), said that the Fascists were "openly favoured by the State authority."

Bordiga, Communist, wrote in the *Labour Monthly* (February and March, 1923):—

After the Nitti, Giolitti, and Bonomi Governments, we had the Facta Cabinet. This type of Government was intended to cover up the complete liberty of action of Fascism in its expansion over the whole country. During the strike in August, 1922, several conflicts took place between the workers and the Fascisti, who were openly aided by the Government. One can quote the example of Bari. During a whole week of fighting, the Fascisti in full force were unable to defeat the Bari workers, who had retired to the working-class quarters of the city, and defended themselves by armed force. The Fascisti were forced to retreat, leaving several of their number on the field. But what did the Facta Government do? During the night they surrounded the old town with thousands of soldiers and hundreds of carabinieri of the Royal Guard. In the harbour a torpedo boat trained its guns on the workers. Armoured cars and guns were brought up. The workers were taken by surprise during their sleep, the Proletarian leaders were arrested, and the Labour headquarters were occupied. This was the same throughout the country. Wherever Fascism had been beaten back by the workers the power of the State intervened; workers who resisted were shot down; workers who were guilty of nothing but self-defence were arrested

and sentenced; while the magistrates systematically acquitted the Fascisti, who were generally known to have committed innumerable crimes. Thus the State was the main factor in the development of Fascism.

Professor Salvemini, a Liberal, gives similar testimony (*Manchester Guardian*, October 19th, 1927). He wrote:—

Mussolini was assisted in the civil war (1921-1922) by the money of the banks, the big industrialists and landowners. His Black-shirts were equipped with rifles, bombs, machine guns and motor lorries by the military authorities, and assured of impunity by the police and the magistracy; while their adversaries were disarmed and severely punished if they attempted resistance.

And lastly Modigliani tells us (*Daily Herald*, October 27th, 1927):—

It was by their (the Italian Cabinet's) contrivance and with the help of military forces of the State that Mussolini and his gangs were able not only to administer Castor Oil, but to murder and burn for two years. And it is in that way that they finally reached the point of the march on Rome, in face of which the King openly and personally sided with the anti-Labour onslaught.

So much for Mr. Rogers and R. Rocker. In conclusion, we would draw attention to the fact, reported at the time, that the commander of the military forces in Rome was, even at the eleventh hour, and in spite of the arms supplied to the Fascists, quite confident of his ability to disperse the black-shirts in a couple of hours. It was not Mussolini who prevented him, but the existing Italian Government, who ordered him to assist Mussolini.

H.

BATTERSEA

An Indoor Meeting

will be held in the

WAITING ROOM,

LATCHMERE ROAD BATHS

March 18th, 1931, at 8.30 p.m.

Speaker J. BANKS.

Subject—

"PARIS COMMUNE."

Questions and Discussion.

Non-Members invited.

THE SOCIALIST PARTY OF AUSTRALIA.

Readers in Australia are invited to communicate with the Socialist Party of Australia at 99, Esplanade, West Port, Melbourne.

UNDER THE SOUTHERN CROSS.**A LETTER FROM AUSTRALIA.**

To those workers in the Old World who obtain their ideas of life under the Southern Cross from school primers and entertaining magazine articles written by Capitalistic globe-trotters, Australia is depicted as a land of wealth and wonder, a semi-tropical and tropical paradise, a land of opportunity for all. Mention of Australia to many in the Old Country begets romantic visions of verdant pasture lands, vast goldfields, gigantic sheep and cattle stations, and a golden sun forever setting on a happy and prosperous population. Lured by attractive stories peddled by professional tale-tellers in Australia House and other Immigration Bureaux, thousands of workers have sought to escape the sordidness of Old World Capitalism in the New World "down under."

In the early days of the pioneers certain opportunities existed in this country for the strong, energetic individuals who were prepared to battle with Nature and win the wealth from the soil and the mineral deposits. But times have changed, and the blighting hand of capitalism has obliterated some of the prettiest beauty spots and established in their place modern cities, containing all the incongruities of civilization. Murky channels have replaced sparkling streams; drab wharves and factories, warehouses and railway sidings have superseded grassy slopes and shady trees which once bordered the banks of the rivers. In place of the primitive system of society there has developed, as in the older countries, the complex system of capitalist society, with all its institutions.

How have the workers of Australia fared under these changing conditions? A brief survey will enable overseas workers to understand the conditions of the workers in this "land of opportunities."

WAGES FALLING.

During recent years there has been a definite downward trend in the wages and standard of living of the workers here. In 1928 the Waterside Workers had their wages reduced, and conditions which had been strenuously fought for in the past were wiped out by the stroke of the pen of an Arbitration Court judge. Later the Timber Workers had to resist an attack on their wages and conditions of employment. Re-

ductions running as high as 26s. per week were imposed, and after a bitter struggle, during which many were jailed and more were batoned and bashed by the police for interfering with blacklegs, the Timber Workers were forced to capitulate. The miners of New South Wales were next attacked, and although they stood out solidly for fifteen months, during which time some of their number were shot dead by the armed thugs of the Capitalist class, they had finally to accept a 12½ per cent. reduction in wages. The irony of the defeat was that they had to surrender after they had helped to return the Labour Party to power, which party had made all sorts of promises to the miners during the election campaign. In almost every other branch of industry wages have been reduced and conditions worsened. To-day there are approximately 200,000 unemployed workers in Australia. So much for the conditions of the workers in the country which perpetually boasts of its incomparable standard of living.

THE AUSTRALIAN LABOUR PARTY.

Time and again this Party has sat on the Government benches, and at the present time we have a Labour Government in the Federal House, and one in New South Wales, Victoria, and South Australia.

Under the Hogan Labour administration in Victoria, members of the Waterside Workers' Federation were shot at and one killed, in 1928. Unemployed workers have been batoned and jailed. The wages of public servants, railwaymen, and others in Government employ have been reduced by order of the Government. Wholesale scabbery has been sanctified, and trade unions have been smashed under the régime of the Labour "stalwarts."

Similar activities have been engaged in by the Labour Government of South Australia. Almost the first thing that the Lang Labour Government in New South Wales did on its taking over last month was to baton the unemployed, to whom Mr. Lang and his henchmen had promised the millennium. Mr. Lang recently purchased(?) a most beautiful yacht, and some unkind critic suggested that he intends to use it as a means of escaping the sordid results of his own administration.

The Federal Labour Government is in a terrible dilemma. Having stated that they could run the system in the interests of all sections of the community, they now find

that Capitalism can be administered in one way only, viz., in the interest of the Capitalist class. Every act they pass, and every move they make accentuates the position. Faced with the greatest depression in years, they have embarked upon an economy campaign which is resulting in thousands of workers being thrown out of their jobs. Their star contortionist, Mr. Theodore, has been tripped by a Royal Commission, which found him guilty of grave offences against the Capitalist class. This gentleman now knows that while the Master class does not mind what a Labour Politician takes from the workers, that class will not stand any interference with their own property. Owing to the finding of the Royal Commission, Mr. Theodore had to stand down from his position as Federal Treasurer, and most of his old friends now look askance at him. While the workers' wages are being reduced, the Labour Prime Minister, "Jim" Scullin, is touring Europe attending to the affairs of the Australian Capitalist class.

THE COMMUNIST PARTY.

This confusing gathering of self-styled revolutionaries presents the sorriest spectacle in Australian politics. For years it supported the anti-working class activities of the Labour Party, on the grounds that the workers would learn by experience. After denouncing the Labour Party as a reform party, it decided to run its own candidates in the last New South Wales elections. Putting forward about fifty-two candidates, they went to the electors on a Communist Reform Platform. Among their reforms were to be found the following:—

Work or maintenance for the unemployed.
Equal pay to women and youth for equal work.

The unrestricted right to organize and strike.

Abolition of all wage taxes and all income taxes on incomes under £400.

Agricultural labourers and all poor and middle farmers to receive the basic industrial wage.

Special grants of money for strike funds and for the relief of strikers and their dependents.

In office, the Communists will attempt to disarm police and Capitalists, and organize an armed workers' militia.

Wage mass drives in defence of the Soviet Union, Hands off India campaigns, in defence of the Chinese Revolution.

Repudiation of all War Debts, etc.

(C.P. Election Manifesto, N.S.W. elections, November, 1930.)

There you have the "revolutionary" aims of the self-styled "vanguard of the working class." Attached to the Communist Party are dozens of other still-born children of the Russian Revolution. There is the Militant Minority Movement, the Young Communist Movement, the I.C.W.P.A., the Friends of the Soviet Union, the Rank and File Movement, *et alia*. A meeting of the Communist Party is held, and there we find all the leading emancipationists. A visit to the M.M.M., and here we find the same faces with different official names. A walk into the I.C.W.P.A. meeting, and here they are again! A peep into the meeting of the F.O.S.U., and once again we see the old familiar faces. The workers are slogged with slogans, confused with a myriad forms of organization, and misled by a million different ruses.

On the Committee of the I.C.W.P.A. are Labour Party politicians, yet the Labour Party jails the men whom the I.C.W.P.A. is attempting to get out. Unlike the pussy in the well, they are put in and pulled out (sometimes) by the same gang.

All the aforementioned Communist groups are out to usher in, like a thief in the night, the "dictatorship of the proletariat." Anybody who refuses to follow their dictates and declines to have his or her head bashed in by the bobby's truncheon is labelled a "defeatist" by these fanatical followers of the "new line" from Moscow.

THE SOCIALIST PARTY OF AUSTRALIA.

Our Party is gradually making itself felt amongst the workers. Small in numbers, and hampered by the confusion created by the Labour Party and the Communist Party, we find it difficult to keep afloat in the political maelstrom. Having Socialism for our objective, we do not expect, nor do we receive, any assistance from the Australian Capitalists or the Russian Capitalists. Nevertheless, we continue with our propaganda, holding our meetings and lectures when circumstances permit. Unemployment amongst our members has prevented us from getting out our Official Party

Organ. Lack of finance is also a factor in the non-appearance of our paper. Without this latter we are seriously handicapped, but we are optimistic. The development of Capitalism in Australia is quickening, and we are convinced that, when we are able to place our position fully before the workers, our efforts will not have been in vain. In spite of all the present drawbacks, we look to the future with hopes of success.

As soon as funds will permit and circumstances warrant it, we will run candidates during future elections and, despite the jibes of our opponents that the majority of the workers will never understand Socialism, we pin our hopes on the working class.

W. J. CLARKE.

(For the Socialist Party of Australia.)

THE SOCIALIST FORUM.

INCENTIVE UNDER SOCIALISM.

A correspondent writes asking what will be the incentive under Socialism.

Human nature being as it is—what incentive for hard work do you propose to put in the place of the desire for freedom from financial worries (both for themselves and those they respect and love), which alone drives men and women of good-will to create (at great cost to themselves) wealth from the resources of nature.

If left to all to set a common standard of life, that standard (besides being an extremely dull one) would be at a lower level than the more advanced would rightly be content to live. Would you drag all humanity down to a low level beyond which so many would not be prepared to work hard enough to go?

Reply.

Human beings, whatever the social system under which they live, must either work to produce the necessities of life, get someone else to work for them, or die of starvation. Our correspondent apparently assumes that under capitalism the wealth and security of the rich results from their own efforts. This is not the case. The rich are rich simply by virtue of owning the means of production which are operated by the working class. We are faced, then, with the remarkable situation that the workers put up with a system in which they are working to enrich a propertied class. When they realise the nature of capitalism and the way in which it can be replaced by Socialism, we believe that they will take that way. We further believe that the members of society will not find it more difficult to co-operate in producing wealth

for themselves than the workers now find it to produce wealth for the capitalist class. In view of the enormous and avoidable waste of capitalism, and in view of the admitted activities of capitalist Governments and industrial associations in restricting production, we are confident that life under Socialism will not be at a low standard. It is for our correspondent to give his reasons for believing that it will.

* * *

A QUESTION ON RENT.

A reader in St. John, N.B., Canada, asks a question about rent.

Does the rent that the worker receives as part of his pay become part of surplus-value after the landlord gets it, or is it only the building labourers, etc., who are exploited by the landlord.

Reply.

The worker is exploited when he works, not when he buys things—whether he buys food, clothing or shelter. The position as regards the rent paid by the workers is the same as in the case of other necessities of life bought with their wages. Rent is the price the workers pay for shelter, and it figures as part of their cost of living. Where rents are low, wages will tend to be low also. The landlord is in the position of other capitalists. Subject to various factors which interfere with the tendency towards a uniform percentage return on all capitals invested, the landlords will tend to receive the same return on capital invested in house-building or house-purchase as they would receive if they invested in any other investment field.

* * *

BANK LOANS AND DEPOSITS.

Two readers (W. Nicholls and E. Wright) draw attention to the address delivered by Mr. McKenna at the shareholders' meeting of the Midland Bank. In the course of the address Mr. McKenna said: "It is evident that more money was created than trade actually needed." These two readers both ask who "created the money" if the banks did not.

What these readers have not allowed for is Mr. McKenna's notoriously loose use of words. If we had only this phrase to go upon, we might believe (as our critics want us to) that Mr. McKenna still holds the view which he is once alleged to have expressed in the phrase, "Every bank loan creates a deposit," i.e., the theory which

Mr. Wright puts as follows: "Banks create money and lend it, using it as capital and so get interest for nothing."

If, however, we read the whole of the passage in which Mr. McKenna dealt with the subject, he makes it quite clear that he does not hold that absurd view. In his speech he pointed out that during 1930 the amount of loans by the Midland Bank decreased while deposits increased by many millions of pounds. (For the whole of the banks on the London Clearing House, loans and advances in 1930 decreased by £50 million, while deposits increased by £72 million.)

What Mr. McKenna really thinks can be seen from his speech at the shareholders' meeting on January 22nd, 1930 (see *Times*, January 23rd, 1930):—

It is a common notion to judge from speeches and letters in the Press, that the banks have an inexhaustible power of lending money to industrial enterprises, and that any industry suffering from general depression could be restored to prosperity if only what is termed a more generous policy were adopted by the banks. (Laughter!) A moment's reflection, however, will show that the banks have no inexhaustible fund to draw upon. The sums they lend are balanced by amounts due to depositors, who would certainly not rest content unless confident that their money was being wisely used and could be repaid to them at any time.

The reply to the question, Who did "create," if not the banks? is that the working class produce wealth by applying their labour-power to natural resources. The wealth when produced belongs to the capitalists. In the early days of capitalism they carried on the process of exchange (i.e., buying and selling) through the medium of gold. With the rise of the banks the latter, using a relatively smaller quantity

of gold, act as intermediaries between capitalist owners of various kinds of goods. Bank deposits represent in money terms some of the commodities which the working class have produced for the capitalists. Purchasing power arises from the ownership of wealth and cannot be "created." Banks act as agents for facilitating exchange between owners.

ED. COMM.

A COCK-EYED WORLD.

SOME ITEMS FROM THE PRESS.

The National Union of Boot and Shoe Operatives, in its report for the half-year ended December 31st, 1930, reports that

the ordinary and legitimate requirements of the public can be met by full-time production during eight months of the year, unemployment and under-employment must continue until such time as we have the good sense to relate our hours to the productive capacity of the industry. (*The Times*, February 5th, 1931.)

In several cases at Merthyr Police Court recently summonses against parents for not sending their children to school were adjourned on the plea that the children had no boots. *News Chronicle*, February 11th, 1931.

The *News-Chronicle* on January 28th reported from Caerphilly, a mining area, that several charges were heard on the previous day of men caught stealing coal.

One man said he had two babies suffering from bronchitis, and they were cold, as he had no coal. He lived in a damp place at the rear of a shop. He had five children, the eldest being eight, and could not send them to school because they had no boots or clothes. He was ordered to pay 5s.

Another offender said that, although working, he had no coal in the house. He had 12 children to keep.

HULL.

A MEETING

will be held on

SUNDAY, MARCH 15th, at 7.30 p.m.

in the

Exchange Room, Metropole Hall

Speaker

E. Boden, Sheffield.

Subject:

'The Alternative to a Labour Government.'

Non-members invited.

Admission Free.

QUESTIONS AND DISCUSSION.

EAST LONDON.

A Meeting will be held at
BROMLEY PUBLIC HALL

ON

Sunday, March 22nd, 1931.

Speaker

W. E. McHAFFIE

Subject—

"SOCIALIST SURVEY."

Doors open 7.30 p.m.

Admission Free.

Non-Members Invited.

Questions and Discussion.

BRANCH DIRECTORY.

- BATTERSEA**.—Sec., W. A. Devine, 2 Hanbury-rd., S.W.11. Branch meets Thursday, 8.30 p.m. at The Waiting Room, Latchmere Baths, entrance in Burns-road. Discussion second Thurs. in month.
- BECONTREE**.—Sec., Hy. Gratton, 4, Drummond Ave., Brooklands, Romford. Branch meets 1st and 3rd Wednesdays at 7.30, at above address.
- BIRMINGHAM**.—Sec., E. Jesper, 32, Rollason-rd., Erdington. Branch meets The Continental Cafe, Moor St., 1st and 3rd Sundays at 11 a.m.
- CENTRAL**.—Membership obtained only through the Ex. Committee. Applications to General Sec.
- EAST LONDON**.—Sec. W. Reynolds, 57, Weymouth Terrace, Hackney Rd. Branch meets every Friday at 8 p.m. at 141, Bow Road. Discussion after Branch business. Public invited.
- GLASGOW**.—Branch meets 2nd and 4th Fridays in month 8 p.m., at 113, Henderson Street, Glasgow, S.1. Sec., A. Shaw.
- HACKNEY**.—Branch meets Arcadian Cafe, 42, Amherst Road, Hackney, 1st and 3rd Fridays in month, 8 p.m., Discussions 9.30. Communication to Sec. at 21 Bridge Street, Homerton, E. 9.
- HULL**.—Branch meets 1st and 3rd Wednesdays in month at 15, Grosvenor Street, Beverley Road. Communications to M. V. Coupland at above address.
- ISLINGTON**.—Branch meets Wednesdays, 8.30, at 144, Seven Sisters-rd., Holloway, N. Communications to that address.
- LEYTON**.—Branch meets 8 p.m., Trades and Labour Hall, Grove House, High-rd., second Mondays in month.
- MANCHESTER**.—Sec., W. Addison. Branch meets 2nd and 4th Mondays in month at 8.15 p.m., at Room 2, 183 Oxford Road, All Saints.
- PADDINGTON**.—Branch meeting held on 2nd and 4th Fridays, 8 p.m., in room above the Co-operative Stores, 306, Kilburn Lane, W.9 (side door).
- SHEFFIELD**.—Branch meets 2nd and 4th Wednesdays 7.30 p.m., Room 5, Trades Hall, Charles Street. Public discussion after business. Secretary E. Boden, 74, Glenalmond Road.
- SOUTHEND-ON-SEA**.—Sec., J. Bird, 5, Wellington-avenue, Westcliffe-on-Sea.
- SOUTHWARK**.—Branch meets Fridays at 8 p.m., 42, Great Dover Street, S.E.1. Communications to Sec., at above address.
- TOOTING**.—Branch meets on the 2nd and 4th Thursday in the month at the Tooting Adult School, 971, Garratt Lane, S.W.17. Sec. (pro-tem), H. E. Hutchins, 174, Haydon's Road, South Wimbledon, S.W.19.
- TOTTENHAM**.—Secretary, 18, Woodlands Park Rd., N.15. Branch meets 1st and 3rd Fridays each month, Room 2, Trades Hall, 7, Bruce Grove, Discussion after branch business. Public invited.
- WALTHAMSTOW**.—Sec. S. E. Williams, 64, Bloxhall-rd., Leyton, E.10. Branch meets at Workmen's Hall, High-st., every Monday.
- WATFORD**.—A. Lawson, Sec., 107, Kensington-avenue, Watford. Branch meets Mondays at 8.30 p.m. at Secretary's address.
- WEST HAM**.—Branch meets Thursdays at 8 p.m. at 167, Romford-rd., Stratford. Sec., P. Hallard, 22, Colegrave-rd., Stratford, E.

WOOD GREEN.—All communications to Sec., F. W. Godfrey, 71, Falkland Road, N. 8. Branch meets 2nd 2nd and 4th Wednesday in month at 8.30 p.m. at Stirling House, Stuart Crescent.

THE SOCIALIST PARTY OF GREAT BRITAIN.

OBJECT.—The establishment of a system of society based upon the common ownership and democratic control of the means and instruments for producing and distributing wealth by and in the interests of the whole community.

DECLARATION OF PRINCIPLES.

THE SOCIALIST PARTY of Great HOLDS— Britain

That society as at present constituted is based upon the ownership of the means of living (i.e., lands, factories, railways, etc.) by the capitalist or master class, and the consequent enslavement of the working class by whose labour alone wealth is produced.

That in society, therefore, there is an antagonism of interests, manifesting itself as a class struggle, between those who possess but do not produce and those who produce but do not possess.

That this antagonism can be abolished only by the emancipation of the working class from the domination of the master class, by the conversion into the common property of society of the means of production and distribution, and their democratic control by the whole people.

That as in the order of social evolution the working class is the last class to achieve its freedom, the emancipation of the working class will involve the emancipation of all mankind, without distinction of race or sex.

That this emancipation must be the work of the working class itself.

That as the machinery of government, including the armed forces of the nation, exists only to conserve the monopoly by the capitalist class of the wealth taken from the workers, the working class must organise consciously and politically for the conquest of the powers of government, national and local, in order that this machinery, including these forces, may be converted from an instrument of oppression into the agent of emancipation and the overthrow of privilege, aristocratic and plutocratic.

That as political parties are but the expression of class interests, and as the interest of the working class is diametrically opposed to the interests of all sections of the master class, the party seeking working-class emancipation must be hostile to every other party.

THE SOCIALIST PARTY of Great Britain, therefore, enters the field of political action determined to wage war against all other political parties, whether alleged labour or avowedly capitalist, and calls upon the members of the working class of this country to muster under its banner to the end that a speedy termination may be wrought to the system which deprives them of the fruits of their labour, and that poverty may give place to comfort, privilege to equality, and slavery to freedom.

Those agreeing with the above principles and desiring enrolment in the Party should apply for membership form to secretary of nearest branch or at Head Office.

THE
Socialist Standard
The Official Organ of **THE SOCIALIST PARTY** of Great Britain.

No. 320. Vol. 27.]

LONDON, APRIL, 1931

[MONTHLY, TWOPENCE.]

THE MOSLEY PARTY.
OLD FALLACIES RE-FURBISHED.

One cannot but sympathise with the exasperation of Labour Party members who were promised something new and striking when their party came into office, and now find themselves not even in the position of defending the Government's actions against criticism, because the Government has, for all practical purposes, not committed any actions. It has just sat tight, apparently paralysed with fear of the consequences should it try to put its programme into operation. As Lady Cynthia Mosley complains, they have had to listen to the Liberal Party smugly reproving the Government for being unprogressive and for allowing itself to be scared into inactivity by the Conservative opposition. If the Liberal demand for action was bluff, as the MacDonald Ministry maintains, why not, she asks, call their bluff? Sir Oswald Mosley, who was a member of the Government, tried to goad them into adopting his scheme for tackling unemployment. Having failed, he has finally taken the step of forming the "New Party."

THE ORIGIN OF THE NEW PARTY.

In the *Leader* on March 10th, 1931, Sir Oswald Mosley tells the story of the Party's formation:—

A year ago I and many other of the younger men began to see the economic crisis which has since struck this country. I was then a Minister, and I submitted a memorandum to the Cabinet showing this, and outlining an active policy to deal with it. What response did I get? I and my friends were laughed at as alarmists, who were always crying "Wolf."

We were told we were young men in a hurry, that there was no economic crisis, that trade would soon mend of itself, that it was silly and unnecessary to take any special emergency measures to deal with the situation. Not once, but again and again, Mr. Snowden, the present Chan-

cellor of the Exchequer, told us all that trade would mend; sometimes he said within a year, sometimes within six months.

Well, the year has gone by, and what do we see? This same Philip Snowden, Chancellor of the Exchequer, comes down to the House of Commons, and in a panic speech announces a crisis. All of a sudden he has been converted to our view, and calls for sacrifices from all.

What does this phrase, "sacrifices from all," mean in plain language? It means simply wage reductions, reductions in all the so-called social services, it means less money for everybody. This is his way of dealing with the crisis.

THE MOSLEY PROGRAMME.

Sir Oswald Mosley, in the article referred to above, and in the pamphlet, "A National Policy" (Macmillan's, 6d.), sets out the principal points in the policy of his party.

Their first demand is for the reform of Parliamentary procedure:—

"Nothing can be done with that creaking, broken-down, antiquated old machine at Westminster."

Secondly, they propose a National Economic Planning Council which would rationalise production and marketing with a view to eliminating waste, overlapping and inefficiency.

Thirdly, there would be Commodity Boards to control the importation of foreign goods which under-sold any home industry. The object of restricting the entry of cheap foreign goods would be to enable the home industry to be re-organised. Protected industries would have to pay an adequate wage; how much, he does not say.

There is to be "economic partnership with the Dominions and Colonies," and trade agreements with foreign countries that are willing to help this country's export trade.

IS PARLIAMENT TOO SLOW?

Sir Oswald Mosley's first error is his supposition that Parliament's failure to do certain things is due to the machinery being out-of-date. The real explanation is that those who control Parliament are, on the whole, very well satisfied with things as they are, and do not want to make any fundamental change. And in this they accurately reflect the insufficient knowledge, lack of purpose and lack of agreement among the electors. If the electors, or a majority of them, wanted something done, the machinery of Parliament would not stand in the way. In 1912 an occasion arose when capitalist interests required a more stringent Official Secrets Act in order to make preparations for the coming war with Germany. The Speaker of the House said it would be contrary to every Parliamentary precedent to put the Bill through as quickly as the promoters desired. Nevertheless, the Bill was pushed through the whole of the stages of the House of Commons procedure and given the Royal Assent all within 24 hours. General Seeley tells the full story in his book, "Adventure."

RATIONALISATION AND UNEMPLOYMENT.

The new Party's next proposal is merely a new version of the century-old demand for increased efficiency as a means of solving capitalism's problems. Sir Oswald Mosley and his lieutenants do not so much as refer to the vital working-class objection to such schemes. Under capitalism the proceeds of the work of the working class do not belong to them. The products of the labour of farm workers and mill hands, railwaymen, clerks, sailors and others are the property of the employing class. Any increase in those products, however it may be obtained, is also the property of the employing class. It does not follow, either in theory or in practice, that the workers will have all or any of the increase in the amount of wealth which may be produced. In addition, rationalisation means the introduction of labour-displacing machinery and devices, with consequent growth in unemployment. Sir Oswald Mosley promises to "rebuild the trade of this country," but overlooks the fact that his schemes of rationalisation would enable still more wealth to be produced by fewer workers. Unless society is re-organised on a Socialist basis, the fruits of economy and greater efficiency will continue to be enjoyed by the propertied class.

The workers, when employed, will continue to get as their share wages based roughly on their cost of living.

THERE IS NO GRAVE CRISIS FOR CAPITALISM.

The new Party, in common with all the "old gangs" whom it criticises, accepts the fallacious doctrines that the workers are poor—and many of them unemployed because of foreign competition, and that the decline in exports in recent years has left capitalist industry unable to afford higher wages.

The workers are poor because the capitalist class own the machinery of production and because they retain and consume a vast amount of the wealth produced.

The volume of imports and exports passing between capitalist countries is related to the total amount of wealth in those countries only in the same way that the exchange of goods between, say, London and Manchester is related to the wealth of the people living in those two cities. The fact that a Manchester firm may lose its London market owing to the opening of a London firm selling the same line of goods, and that a London firm producing some other article may lose its Manchester market to a new Manchester firm, does not mean necessarily that Manchester and London become poorer. If the change has been due to the utilisation of more efficient machinery and methods of production, the amount of wealth produced, and still more the amount capable of being produced, will be greater than before in both areas. But the workers may get none of the increase.

During the years since the war the exports from this country have heavily declined in value, due in part to technical developments in industry and agriculture which have made it more profitable for the capitalists of this and other countries to employ workers on the production of certain articles at home, instead of importing them. Imports and exports have fallen, but the wealth of this country has been increasing.

Mosley, like the Empire Free Traders, points to the fact that there are farmers in the Dominions who cannot sell their grain, and factory owners here who cannot sell their industrial products. He asks, Why not bring the two together? But what about the farmers here who cannot sell their grain, and the factory owners in the Dominions who cannot sell their industrial goods?

When Sir Oswald Mosley says that the position of the industrial capitalist "becomes daily more impossible," and that there is now a crisis which will smash Great Britain unless something drastic is done about it, he is talking nonsense. The capitalists' average rate of profit has remained remarkably stable since the war at a level well above the pre-war average. (For figures, see March SOCIALIST STANDARD.) The present two and a half million unemployed is no higher than the number recorded during the Lloyd George Coalition Government's term of office. It is merely a sign of the periodical accumulation of goods which cannot be sold because the employing class have satisfied all their wants, although they still have vast purchasing power available. Now that production has been severely curtailed, the accumulation is being got rid of. In due course sales will revive and unemployment will fall to a lower figure. The Labour Government went into office gambling that unemployment would decrease. They backed the wrong horse at that time. Mosley now appears to be gambling that it will continue to increase heavily. He looks like being disappointed.

THE MOSLEY PARTY A CAPITALIST PARTY.

The Mosley Party may make headway among disappointed members of the existing parties, but it seems obvious that, in spite of a lavish expenditure of money on meetings and posters and talk of 400 candidates at the next election, they cannot hope to be in a position to apply their programme except by joining with some other party.

But even if Mosley did manage to get Governmental power, his programme would not solve the problems of the workers. The chief promoters of the Party have every appearance of muddle-headed sincerity, but they have explicitly ruled out the only solution of the workers' problems, i.e., the abolition of capitalism. In "A National Policy" occurs the following declaration:—

Questions of the ultimate goal of society are excluded by the urgency of the problem which confronts us. (Page 6.)

Moreover, not only do they exclude questions of the ultimate goal of society, but they do not even admit Socialism—that is, common ownership of the machinery of production and distribution—as being a question at all. For them the question of the ultimate goal of society is merely the issue of State capitalism versus private capitalism

—an issue of no concern to Socialists.

Mr. W. E. D. Allen, the Conservative M.P. for West Belfast, who has joined the Party, confesses that his object in joining it is "the adjustment of the capitalist system to the economic needs of the nation as a whole" (*Star*, March 9th), and he further says that his action is no offence against the "broad principles of Ulster Unionism" (*Manchester Guardian*, March 3rd).

THE MOSLEY PARTY AND THE LABOUR PARTY.

Most of the original support for the new programme came from Labour M.P.'s, the majority of whom, however, deserted Mosley when he actually formed the new Party. Those who went right through with it—Lady Cynthia Mosley, Mr. Strachey and Dr. Forgan—have all defended their action on the ground that it is not they, but the Labour Party which has deserted the Labour programme. They have stated explicitly that they still stand by "Labour and the Nation," the programme on which they were elected. They also maintain that they are Socialists.

Mr. W. J. Brown, M.P., who left the Labour Party, but now declines to join the Mosley Party, although his name appears as one of the writers of "A National Policy," and although he was billed to speak at meetings of the new Party, takes up a quite different attitude.

Although he also was elected as a Labour Party candidate on "Labour and the Nation," he declares that "Labour and the Nation" is a programme of capitalism. This he did in a speech at the 1928 Labour Party Conference (see Conference Report, page 207). He said that its application would give "not Socialism, but a State-subsidised capitalism."

From this speech and from Mr. Brown's subsequent actions, two things emerge. The first is that in his view he and the other Mosleyites, as well as all the Labour M.P.'s, were elected on a capitalist programme. The second is that, whereas in 1928 he rejected "Labour and the Nation" and said he wanted in its place Socialism, he has since changed his mind. He still rejects "Labour and the Nation," but, in common with the Mosleyites, he wants a different kind of capitalist programme, i.e., the Mosley programme which he helped to draft.

THE ANGRY I.L.P.

The I.L.P. are furious with Mosley, not because the new Party is a capitalist party, but because it threatens to queer the pitch of the Labour Party and the I.L.P.

The I.L.P. are amazed, no doubt, at the Mosleyites leaving the Labour Party. Seeing that the Labour Party are acting as "caretakers of capitalism" (as it was put by the prominent member of the I.L.P., Mr. Campbell Stephen, M.P., in the *New Leader* on March 13th), why go outside and form another party of caretakers of capitalism? The I.L.P. Members of Parliament, who form a majority of the Parliamentary Labour Party, are quite prepared to go on acting as caretakers of capitalism, but they strongly resent the action of the Mosley group who were, apparently, honest enough to leave the Labour Party when they found themselves no longer in agreement with it. The action of the Mosley group shows up the Maxtonites for what they are—a body of dishonest and cowardly time-servers, pretending to condemn the Labour programme as a programme of capitalism, but themselves seeking election on it, and painfully careful never to translate their words into deeds.

THE OLD "NEW PARTY."

It would be a pity not to refer to a very cruel blow delivered at the new Party by a correspondent of the *Manchester Guardian*. He points out the marked resemblance between the new programme and the writings of Bishop Berkeley. Mr. John Strachey, M.P., a member of the Mosley group, confesses that Bishop Berkeley was one of his father's favourite authors, and that the new Party is indeed indebted to the Bishop. But he asks (*Manchester Guardian*, February 28th), "Why should we deny it?" "Because a man lived 200 years ago, is he necessarily wrong?" We would ourselves like to ask the Mosley Party what reason they can urge against trying Socialism, especially in view of the great age of their own policy? H.

DEATH OF W. E. MacHAFFIE.

We regret to have to announce the death of Comrade W. E. MacHaffie. An appreciation of our late comrade will be published in the May issue.

MACHINES IN OFFICES.**A CALL TO CLERICAL WORKERS.**

Office staffs in all branches of commerce and industry are now finding themselves faced with reductions in pay. In nearly every instance the employers, when "informing" the staff of salary revisions (as the General Manager of the Midland Bank told the Royal Commission on the Civil Service, the Bank Board does not discuss wages with the staff, it "informs them of its decision"), give the excuse that the reductions are only reasonable adjustments to a lower cost of living, so that the real standard of salaries is not being impaired. Clerical workers, while far from satisfied that a reduced salary in 1931 will go as far as a larger salary in 1929, with the docility for which they are infamous, and with a fatalistic resignation, assume that perhaps there has to be a reduction in their pay if trade is to improve. Does it ever occur to them to consider whether the "reduction-to-meet-the-fall-in-prices" sauce that is served for the goose, salaries, is also served for the gander, dividends? In the world of banking, at any rate, it is not.

Recently there has been much talk of the need to reduce the pay of bank clerks "in order to meet changed conditions." The lead has been taken by the Midland Bank, Ltd., which has revised its scales of pay for new entrants. Formerly a clerk in London after ten years' service received £240 a year if he was on the maximum scale. By the fifteenth year his pay had risen automatically to £370. Beyond that point further increases were at the discretion of the directors. Under the new scale a new entrant will receive, at the most, only £205 after ten years, and at this point automatic rises cease. Other banks are following suit.

Now what about dividends? Here directors and their Press are strangely silent about falling costs of living. All of the "Big Five" banks (except Lloyds, which reduced dividends from 16 2/3 per cent. to 15 per cent.) paid the same dividend in 1930 as in 1929. But, according to Mr. McKenna, of the Midland Bank, the purchasing power of money in 1930 was 19 per cent. higher than in 1929, owing to the fall in prices. From which it follows that the shareholders received a 19 per cent. increase in real dividends in 1930, and even Lloyds' shareholders were 2 per cent. better off than

in the previous year. To this maintenance of dividends, side by side with a reduction in salaries to meet lower prices, the remark of Sir Frederick Lewis, Bt., when proposing a hearty vote of thanks to the staff of Barclays Bank, comes as a nicely ironic pendant. Sir Frederick, who, by the way, manages to direct the affairs of a mere 32 companies, was filled with love and admiration for the staff, but unfortunately "the only method they had of recording their appreciation was the passing of the resolution he had the honour to propose" (*Times*, January 21st, 1931). Needless to say, as votes of thanks, be they never so hearty, do not cut into profits, the shareholders passed the vote with enthusiasm.

On the face of it, the reduction in pay of clerical workers may look like an adjustment to lower price levels, as the employers say that it is. In fact, it is something much more important. It is an attack on standards of living and a revelation of a weakening in bargaining power of the workers. It is the first of the consequences of the mechanisation of office work that has been proceeding apace since the end of the war. Machines in offices are producing the same results as are produced by machines in industry. Unemployment, formerly of fairly small proportions so far as clerical workers were concerned, is increasing and wages are falling. Before the war the typewriter was the chief piece of office machinery. To-day it is only one of many. Calculating machines, ledger posting machines, addressographs, mechanical sorters, copying machines, automatic switchboards are but a few of the mechanical devices that are supplanting labour in offices and, by simplifying processes, increasing competition. Before the calculating machine was used, a certain proficiency in arithmetic was essential for a clerk; now it is not at all necessary. Consequently, employers are able to recruit their staff from a lower educational grade, and to utilise women instead of men. In other words, the supply of clerical workers is being extended while the demand is diminishing. It is this that leads to increased unemployment and enables attacks on wage standards to be successfully launched. The talk of reducing pay in order to help trade recovery is a mere subterfuge. Clerical workers should not blind themselves to the real economic forces at work. As was stated by a writer in the *Journal of the Institute of Bankers* in

Ireland (October, 1929), the changes resulting from the introduction of machines into offices are "analogous in some respects to the industrial revolution of a century ago." According to this writer, office machines give three times the output possible by hand, with less and cheaper labour. Other conclusive evidence to the same effect is abundant. Mr. H. L. Rouse, Assistant Chief Accountant of the Midland Bank, Ltd., wrote in *The Banker* (November, 1930): "Two ledger posting machines should enable two male clerks to be released (!) and should necessitate the engagement of one new female operator." In a debate reported in the *Journal of the Institute of Bankers* (January, 1930), Mr. Rouse, discussing the installation of machinery at 73 branches of the Midland, said: "The net saving of salary to these branches is approximately £85,000 per annum against a capital outlay of £150,000; but as the life of these machines may be fairly regarded as ten years, it is obvious that the economy effected is a very substantial one."

He went on to point out that at these branches 311 men were withdrawn consequent on the introduction of the machines, and 86 women engaged, and that new entrants to the bank had been considerably curtailed, so that juniors already in the service would have to mark time for a period until the process of mechanisation had reached its economic limit. Mr. F. Hyde, General Manager of the Midland Bank, told the Civil Service Royal Commission, on Monday, February 23rd, 1931, that the machines had enabled his bank to cut down their intake of young male clerks from between 400 and 500 a year to about 200 a year.

It is interesting, in passing, to notice that the same problem arose in the Post Office Savings Bank before it arose in the non-Government banks. It is claimed by high Savings Bank officials that the Post Office led the way in introducing machines and is already saving £40,000 a year by employing lower-paid women machine operators in place of men clerks. One witness at the Civil Service Commission, Sir Alfred Woodgate, went so far as to suggest the replacement of the great bulk of men clerks in the Civil Service by women at lower pay.

This general tendency to employ women on machine operating intensifies the down-

ward tendency of wages. The male clerical worker hopes to rise to a certain salary, say, in 15 years, and to receive at least that salary for the rest of his working life, say for 30 years. But women workers' salaries do not rise to the same levels, and as women retire earlier than men, they receive the highest rates of pay in fewer instances and for a shorter period. On this point Mr. Rouse, in the debate already referred to, was quite definite, his evidence being to the effect that "the female staff are more subject to change than the male staff; in fact, 15 per cent. to 20 per cent. of the females resign every year and are replaced by new entrants at the lowest salary."

This is sufficient to show how machinery causes workers to be dismissed, the substitution of cheaper labour, and a contraction in the demand for labour.

The introduction of mechanical appliances has already gone far, but the process is only in its infancy. As the City Editor of *The Times* states: "The mechanisation of banking is likely to increase considerably during the next few years in order to reduce labour costs" (*Times*, December 22nd, 1930). This remark can safely be extended to apply to all other branches of clerical employment.

So far as Socialists are concerned, we have dealt with this mechanisation of clerical work because it bears out two points we have always made.

Firstly, it shows that, under capitalism, machines are additional weapons in the hands of the employers, creating unemployment and lowering wages. Secondly, clerical workers must ultimately realise that they are not a class apart in society, a "middle class," but that, economically considered, their position is identical with that of the so-called manual workers. They are, like navvies, dependent for their living on being able to sell their labour-power. They are propertyless individuals working for wages for the benefit of the property-owning class. They are members of the working class. Until they act politically in the light of that fact, they will continue to find that machinery is of no benefit to them.

"BANK CLERK."

FINSBURY PARK.

Meetings will be held in Finsbury Park each Sunday at 3 p.m. commencing 12th April.

IS RUSSIA TO BLAME?

Capitalism is responsible for unemployment and all the other evils from which the members of the working class suffer as such. The politicians who exist to defend the system, however, cannot afford to admit this. To do so would put an end to their job. Hence we find them seeking refuge in various excuses. The Labour Party attributes unemployment to "world causes." The more blatant section of the Conservatives ascribe it to a Labour Government plus Russian "dumping." Their recent campaign against exports from Russia, on the ground of the slavish conditions under which they are produced, presents features which are both interesting and amusing.

Russia is a Protectionist country, like Germany and the U.S.A., and if all that the Tories have told us about conditions of employment there were true, it would only prove that Protection is of no value to the workers of Russia.

In the endeavour to industrialise Russia, its Communist rulers are imposing considerable hardships upon their wage-slaves. The Communists do not deny this. Nay, they boast about it. They proclaim that this is the inevitable method of "building up Socialism," and that the Russian workers are only too pleased to suffer for "their" country. All of which proves, if true, that the workers of Russia are as gullible as their fellows elsewhere. They see in the steady accumulation of capital the growth of a god before whom they must bow and worship.

The Conservatives of Britain, however, attribute the sufferings of the Russian workers, not to the development of capitalism (which is their actual cause), but to the Communist mask worn for the nonce by the Russian ruling class, which will be dropped when it ceases to serve its purpose of deceiving the workers. It is evident to anyone who looks back over the history of the last thirty years, that Russia has simply taken the place of Germany in the minds of the rabid "patriots."

They are not concerned with the evils endured by the Russian workers for whose blood they will howl, if and when occasion arises, just as vigorously as they did for that of the Germans. They are concerned merely to provide in advance an excuse for the fact that when they eventually unseat the Labour Party they will be as unable to prevent unemployment as they have proved

hitherto. The relief they may offer the starving workless will be another hectic time in the shambles, possibly with the Russian workers for company.

E. B.

THE FALL OF RIAZANOV.

The process of eliminating all of the better-known men and women who were prominent in the Bolshevik party at the time of the seizure of power has gone so far that practically all of them now share Trotsky's fate as exiles, or are in prison or relegated to obscurity. The latest person to be got rid of is D. Riazanov, the authority on the literature of Marxism, who formed, under the auspices of the Soviet Government, the Marx-Engels Institute in Moscow.

Riazanoff has been removed from his post as Director of the Institute, expelled from the Russian Communist Party, and lodged in jail on the grounds of alleged "betrayal of the Party" and "rendering assistance to the Mensheviks and foreign interventionists."

It would be idle to discuss whether these or any of the charges levelled by the Russian ruling caste against its opponents are well-founded, for the simple reason that those charged are not in a position to defend themselves. The authorities are in a position to secure whatever verdict they like and to publish alleged "confessions" in the names of the prisoners. After more than one of the past trials the prisoners have in private conversation repudiated their "confessions."

What is interesting about Riazanov's case is that his deposition is accompanied by the claim that his reputation as an authority on Marxism was totally undeserved. He is now alleged never to have understood the Marxian system—this in spite of the fact that only last year, when he reached the age of sixty, great honours were shown him officially, including the award of the Order of the Red Flag.

The real reason for the denial of Riazanov's soundness as a Marxian can possibly be looked for in the urgent need to mislead the Russian workers into the belief that the Russian system of "State capitalism" is in reality "Socialism."

We have before drawn attention to the theories now being propounded in Communist economic text-books, according to

which the Russian workers are not exploited, in spite of the existence of a growing class of investors in that country. Marx showed that you cannot have a rent, interest and profit system without the exploitation of the workers. Marxism has consequently been unpalatable to Russia's rulers. Anyone who cannot or will not swallow the bowdlerised Marxism of the Communist Party dictators necessarily becomes a danger to their interests.

Perhaps Riazanov has been guilty of knowing too much about Marxian theories, and of not knowing how to dance to a different tune.

R. E.

THE PEOPLE.

By Campanella.

(Translated by J. A. Symonds.)

The people is a beast of muddy brain
That knows not its own force, and therefore stands

Loaded with wood and stone; the powerless hands

Of a mere child guide it with bit and rein;
One kick would be enough to break the chain;

But the beast fears, and what the child demands,

It does; nor its own terror understands,
Confused and stupefied by bugbears vain.

Most wonderful: With its own hand it ties
And gags itself—gives itself death and war.
For pence doled out by kings from its own store.

Its own are all things between earth and heaven;

But this it knows not; and if one arise
To tell this truth, it kills him unforgiven.

SHEFFIELD.

A MEETING

will be held on
Wednesday, April 22nd, at 7.30 p.m.

in the
TRADES HALL (ROOM 5),
CHARLES STREET.

Speaker

B. Osborne.

Subject:

"Is the Communist Party Revolutionary?"

Non-members invited.

Admission Free.

Questions and Discussion.

OFFICIAL NOTICE.

All communications for the Executive Committee, Subscriptions for the *SOCIALIST STANDARD*, Articles, and Correspondence submitted for insertion therein, should be addressed—The Socialist Party of Great Britain, 42, Great Dover Street, London, S.E.1, to whom Money Orders should be made payable.

The meetings of the Executive Committee are held at the Head Office, every Tuesday, at 7.30 p.m.

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The Socialist Standard,

APRIL,



1931

A RED HERRING.

The recent election in St. George's raises a few interesting questions.

In the first place, there seems little doubt that Tory, Labour and Liberals were allied in supporting the Conservative candidate against the Rothermere - Beaverbrook nominee. But the first question that strikes one is, Why all the bother and mud-slinging? What is behind the Rothermere-Beaverbrook attempt to run the Conservative Party? And, further, why the comparative unanimity between Conservatives, Liberals and Labour on the Indian Question? Is it all a game of bluff?

That Rothermere and Beaverbrook desire to wield the balance of power in the Conservative Party, and that Winston Churchill (who up to the present seems always to have changed his political colours too late) desires the position of Prime Minister, may all be true, but yet not the main object behind the trouble.

Ireland was for decades a useful blind to keep the English workers from taking too close an interest in their own political circumstances. After Ireland had passed out of the picture, Russia stepped in, and now India is in the limelight. But in the meantime Liberal, Tory and Labour have been drawing closer together and the Labour Party have given ample evidence of their ability to steer accurately in the interests of capital. There is a danger of the workers getting restive and dissatisfied with the Labour Party's meek acceptance of

capitalist conditions. What better method then of heading off dangerous restiveness than by putting up a sham fight with a new brand of capitalist political parties. The hazier and more indefinite the object and programme, the larger the number of people likely to be attracted.

The way Gandhi has been manoeuvred into such a position that many of his followers are now repudiating him, suggests the nature of the bluff.

The *Daily Mail* and the *Evening News* have been publishing furious articles about the surrender to Gandhi, but Gandhi has now discovered that there are certain reservations relating to safeguards in the British Government's agreement that were (purposely?) not made clear to him at the time of signing.

In the meantime, mass protest meetings are being held in India by Hindus who threaten to withdraw their support from Gandhi if he agrees to certain demands of the Moslems. It looks very like the old game of "divide and conquer."

To the worker the issues raised at St. George's were of no concern, as the interests engaged were capitalist interests. Self-government for India, like self-government for Ireland, is only a question of which group of capitalists will rule. The dinners to Gandhi given by the rich Bombay mill-owners are suggestive of the meaning of Indian self-government to the mass of the population of India.

For over a century the population of India has been exploited for the benefit of European capitalists who broke up the old communal village system of production that had flourished there for ages. In the meantime, native capitalists have amassed wealth and own much of the recently developed instruments of modern production. The latter now want political domination in order to secure a greater share of the fruits of the labour of the Indian workers—hence the movement for self-government.

Indian working men and women are exploited in mills, mines and on the land, like their English brethren, and, like them also, their only salvation lies in the international movement for Socialism. In this movement no help is to be expected from Indian mill-owners nor from the parties in this country that are united in demanding the continuance of present conditions, whether they fly the colours of Tory, Liberal, Labour or United Empire Parties.

THE SOCIALIST FORUM.**SHOULD WE JOIN THE LABOUR PARTY?**

A correspondent (A. J. G., Wimbledon) asks why we do not get inside the Labour Party and help to convert it to Socialism. He writes:—

I am still a member of the Labour Party, because though differing widely from our present leaders, I think there is yet hope of getting the Party machine under the control of genuine socialists. (The same applies to the T.U.'s.)

As the break down of the Capitalist system becomes increasingly apparent, involving more poverty, unemployment and strikes, the position of some of our leaders of "sitting on the fence" will be more and more difficult and a choice, have to be made by them on a clear issue.

I suggest that your influence (had you been inside the Party) in conjunction with the I.L.P. and many Communists who still remain in the Party, would have helped to bring about the above result.

Reply.

Our correspondent's letter deserves close attention because it expresses the point of view of a considerable number of workers who have perceived the necessity for abolishing capitalism, but have not yet perceived that there is only one way in which that can be brought about. Each of the statements in the letter contains a partial truth, but in each case a deeper examination leads to a precisely opposite conclusion.

He says that he differs from the leaders of the Labour Party, but overlooks the very important fact that if this is a correct indication of his position, then he differs also from the overwhelming majority of the rank and file of the Labour Party, because the opinions and actions of those leaders are a very close reflection of the opinions of the members as a whole. We are aware that it is a constant slogan of the series of "Left Wing" movements, which follow each other like the days of the week, that the leaders do not represent the rank and file's views; but it is without any foundation. The same leaders with the same old tricks are elected and re-elected with monotonous regularity. When Maxton and Cook started their short-lived campaign which was going to carry a fiery cross through the Labour movement, they had to confess within a few short weeks that the working class wanted MacDonald and Thomas, with all their black record of betrayals of working-class interests.

Our correspondent says next that the leaders of the Labour Party and the Trade Unions will have to give up sitting on the fence and make a choice on a clear issue. Why must they do anything of the kind? Was not the war in 1914 a clear issue? And the "greater production" campaign in 1919? And the series of "agreed" wage reductions in the past two years? And taking office on Liberal votes in the House of Commons? They have all been clear issues to the Socialist, but not clear to the members of the Labour Party. In consequence, the leaders have either sat on the fence or come down solidly and with the uproarious approval of their members on the capitalist side of it.

Lastly, we are told that we should have been inside the Labour Party, associating with the I.L.P. and the Communists, trying to oust the present leaders. Our correspondent disregards the facts. In the past four or five years I.L.P. members have been a clear majority of the Parliamentary Labour Party. So that every one of the leaders from whom our correspondent "differs widely" have been elected by the I.L.P. members with whom he wants us to associate for the purpose of opposing those leaders! For a whole series of elections the Communists were in precisely the same boat. As we have pointed out in these columns year by year, the Communist Party has repeatedly told the workers to vote for MacDonald, Thomas, Frank Hodges, Clynes, Henderson, and the rest of the leaders. When Mr. Maxton was asked if he would try to get rid of MacDonald, he replied that he would not.

Lastly, our correspondent is silent upon one very important question. He gives us to understand that he is busy in the Labour Party trying to convert the members of the Labour Party and trying to get rid of the anti-working-class leaders. May we ask him a few questions? Does he tell the workers to vote at election times for these leaders? Or does he tell the workers that voting to return these men to Parliament is voting for the retention of capitalism? If he does the former, then he is not helping Socialism forward. Further, if he, or we, were inside the Labour Party, telling the workers to vote against Labour Party candidates, we would be confusing the minds of the workers. And, moreover, the Labour leaders would soon see to it that we were put outside, where we belong. Finally, the

only way to obtain Socialism is to advocate it, and not to help the Labour Party by increasing the mental confusion already existing.

A DEFENCE OF THE I.L.P.

Mr. W. Latimer (Carlisle) objects to our policy, particularly our criticism of the I.L.P. The chief points in his letter are given below, together with our reply.

(1) I accuse you of misrepresentation of the I.L.P. . . . You wrote that the I.L.P. is not a Socialist organisation or party. What is it then? Capitalist?

(2) What are you doing to nullify the attacks of the capitalist class?

(3) How are you capturing the various weapons (State and Municipal) for the workers?

(4) Have you a policy to put into practice when you acclaim power?

(5) What are you doing to Socialise the Labour Party and the Trades Unions?

Reply.

(1) The I.L.P. stands for nationalisation under which the capitalist class will continue in existence, but will draw their income on Government stocks instead of on company shares. "The Socialist Programme" (published by the I.L.P. in 1923) says:—

The present shareholders in mines and railways could receive State mines or railway stock based on a valuation and bearing a fixed rate of interest. (Page 24.)

That is capitalism. The party which advocates it is a capitalist party.

(2) While pointing out the limitations of trade union action, we urge the workers to resist attempts by the employers to lower wages. This has been made more difficult by the actions of the Labour Government in reducing the pay of Civil Servants. A majority of the Labour M.P.s are members of the I.L.P., which therefore cannot escape responsibility.

(3) The I.L.P. members in Parliament were all elected on the Labour Party programme, described by Mr. Maxton as a capitalist programme. That is not capturing the political machinery for Socialism, but for something else.

(4) Socialists want power only for the purpose of introducing Socialism. That is our programme.

(5) By propagating Socialist principles among the workers we try to make Socialists of them, whether in the trade unions or in the Labour Party or any other non-Socialist party. Our work is made vastly more difficult by I.L.P. propaganda,

which misleads the workers into believing that nationalisation is Socialism and will benefit them. (See I.L.P. pamphlet, "Socialism in Queensland," for an example of harmful I.L.P. propaganda.)

WHY WORKERS DO NOT JOIN THE SOCIALIST PARTY.

Glasgow,
January 16th, 1931.

To the Editor,

THE SOCIALIST STANDARD.

Dear Comrade,

Re your question to non-members, I venture to put forward a few reasons as to the apparent apathy among sympathisers. I am certain there must be some thousands of Socialists in this so-called second city of the Empire who are unattached to any party. At the Sunday night meetings here at West Regent Street, your speaker, Comrade Shaw, can and does, hold large and attentive crowds, seldom or never are questions put forward. I am convinced that a fair percentage of these crowds is made up of individuals who have, at one time or another, been members of a political organization, and are, as it were, sitting on the fence. The following are some of the reasons (in my opinion), why men hold aloof:—

(1) Many are convinced Socialists that grudge the time and energy that is expected of them when joined up in an organization—Laziness.

(2) Not a few would join up and take an active part in the movement, but for the fact that it would cause unpleasantness, if not unhappiness in the home. One real Socialist in the midst of anti-Socialists is always in hot water, and to one who takes an active part for Socialism the water is extra hot.

(3) No doubt a number are timid or funky Socialists, and are somewhat obsessed with the thought that to be seen or heard by gaffer or boss taking part in Socialist propaganda, means, if not the sack, becoming a set man.

(4) Again, I believe there are many who have made up their minds that Socialism won't come in "their" time, have become disgruntled at the apathy of the masses, and are out to get as cushy a time possible out of the present system.

The above four reasons apply to Socialists only; outside of these, of course, are a host

of bewildered individuals who listen to the various speakers of different organizations—each and all slating each other; these bewildered ones won't read or think for themselves, hence their bewilderment. As to those who oppose the position of the S.P.G.B., I mention one view which I often hear advanced. Many Socialist politicians start off in all good faith and earnestness, but when they get mixed up in Westminster or Trade Union atmosphere, they are bought over, become corrupt, make a position or pension. They have arrived, lifted out of the gutter, as it were, on the backs of others. They are convinced that Socialism won't come in "their" time; their bread and butter is secure. They become apathetic or hypocritical, and the cause is deserted.

There can be no guarantee for the integrity of any man, no man is infallible; human flesh and, too often, the spirit, is weak.

Would S.P.G.B. M.P.s have this integrity and soundness of spirit? Would they withstand the temptations by which many have failed? Would they hold the bridge or sell the pass?

I know a reasoned answer can be given to above, but without doubt, this view sticks in the minds of many. Let us hope this letter will open up discussion on same.

Yours for Socialism,

F. J. DERRETT.

The above letter very well sums up the various reasons given by sympathisers for remaining outside the Socialist Party. We would suggest to our sympathisers that they should reconsider whether their reasons are really adequate.

A number of readers have pointed out that many Socialists are undoubtedly in the position that they dare not actively associate with the Socialist Party without certain loss of their employment. This applies particularly in small country and provincial towns, where any public activity is sure to come to the ears of employers.

The reference in the above letter to the untrustworthiness of political representatives is worth special comment.

Electors who want a certain end but are not prepared to support the only way of getting it are sure to be disappointed. Nothing can prevent it, not even the most incorruptible of political representatives. How, for example, can any M.P. keep his

pledge to solve the problems of unemployment and poverty if the electorate are not prepared to have Capitalism replaced by Socialism? M.P.s being human, and being usually under the necessity of earning their living by keeping their seat, have no choice but to go on doing those things that the electors are prepared to support.

The only remedy is a politically educated electorate which knows the problems and the solution. Nobody can "sell" an electorate which knows what it wants and how to get it. The Socialist Party does not say, "Support us and all will be well." Our message to the workers is, "Study Socialism yourselves; organise in the Socialist Party to get it." Only Socialist knowledge will protect the workers against leaders and misleaders.

The chief trouble now is not that workers' leaders sell out and go over openly to the other side, but that they remain in the workers' movement because the workers approve of Capitalist policies. Should a Socialist M.P. sell out, that would end his association with the Socialist movement.

ED. COMM.

CORRECTION.

CO-OPERATIVE SOCIETIES' PROFITS.—On page 98 of the March SOCIALIST STANDARD (column 2, paragraph 1) the total amount of the profits of the Co-operative Societies was given as "over 22 million pounds." This should have been "over 26 million pounds."

THE 27th ANNUAL PARTY CONFERENCE

WILL BE HELD ON

Friday and Saturday, April 3rd and 4th,

FAIRFAX HALL,

STANHOPE GARDENS, HARRINGAY, N.

Commence at 10 a.m.

Open to All.

THE ANNUAL PARTY RE-UNION

will take place in the above Hall on

GOOD FRIDAY, APRIL 3rd, at 7.30 p.m.

DOORS OPEN 7 p.m.

Tickets from any Branch Secretary, or Head Office.

"CAUSES OF BELIEF IN GOD."

This pamphlet by Paul Lafargue has been reduced in price to 3d. per copy, 3½d. post free. Send for a copy now.

PSYCHOLOGY AND SOCIALISM.

A reader has asked us to give our views on "Psychoanalysis and Sociology," by Aurel Kolnai, translated by Eden and Cedar Paul, and published in 1921 by George Allen & Unwin, Ltd. It was an attempt to use psychoanalysis to throw light on the part played by society in shaping the individual. The translation is in a style which often makes it exceedingly difficult to understand what the author is driving at, and there is abundant evidence to show that he was quite unfitted to pursue this study, or in fact any study requiring logical argument backed up by knowledge and evidence.

This may be illustrated from his chapter on "Marxism as a Social Psychosis." He says (p. 157) that "Marx espoused the Hegelian dialectic with great energy, merely replacing spirit in that system by economics, *conceived as autonomous, independent, mystically operative*" (italics ours).

What exactly the italicised passage means it is hard to say, but it is certain that Marx himself did not conceive his theories in any such light. The view expressed must therefore be entirely Kolnai's own, but not one word of justification or explanation does he offer. This is typical of the whole book—an uninterrupted flow of obscurely worded assumptions linked together by the slenderest thread of connections.

Aurel Kolnai says that Marxists show all the signs of paranoia (p. 159), "a form of insanity, characterised by systematic delusions." All the evidence he offers is contained in two statements; first, that Marxian theories "suffice to arouse a suspicion" that they have not a rational basis, and, second, that Marxism "vividly recalls" the idea of Christ the Saviour.

But these two assertions do not tell us anything about Marxism and Marxians. What "suffices" for Aurel Kolnai would not suffice for most people; and when he says that Marxism vividly recalls Jesus Christ to him, that only tells us something about Kolnai, about his trend of thought and about his inadequate ideas concerning proof.

And having so easily "proved" that Marxism is paranoia, he just as easily shifts his ground and allows that it is not "simply a case of paranoia" (p. 161). He

even admits (p. 164) that the conditions under which the workers live may be a "contributory" cause towards moulding their ideas.

It is a pity that Aurel Kolnai did not follow up this one fruitful line of inquiry. If he had done so, he would have discovered that the private ownership, by the Capitalist class, of society's means of life is not a "systematic delusion," but a hard fact. It is the determining factor in shaping the worker's ideas, because it governs the material conditions of his life.

H.

SOCIALISTS AND THE COMMUNIST PARTY.

A correspondent asks why we oppose the Communist Party. Our general objection is that the Communists confuse the workers as to the meaning of Socialism and urge them to follow policies which are useless and dangerous.

The Communists mislead the workers by claiming that Socialism has been or is being established in Russia. The claim is false. In Russia all of the essential features of capitalism exist, and are not in process of being abolished. The workers are wage-earners, as they are here. Goods are produced for sale, not for use. Means of production are privately owned. There is vast inequality of income. Persons in administrative and technical posts receive twenty and thirty times as much as industrial workers. There is rent, interest and profit. The State capitalist industries and farms (mis-called "Socialist") are avenues for the investment of the surplus wealth of the wealthier sections of the population. There is a great and growing investing class drawing incomes from their investments in State loans at 10 per cent. and over.

We do not condemn the Bolsheviks for the fact that capitalism exists and develops in Russia. They would have had Socialism if they could, but the conditions do not exist to make Socialism possible.

We condemn the Communist Party for pretending that Russian capitalism is Socialism merely because it is administered by Communists.

We condemn the Communists for their dangerous and futile policy of setting unarmed workers against the armed forces of the State.

We condemn the Communists for their advocacy of reforms and for their policy of telling the workers to vote into power Labour Party candidates, whom the Communists themselves admit will use their power to bolster up capitalism.

ED. COMM.

A SOCIALIST SEARCHLIGHT.

LABOUR PARTY AN INVESTORS' PARTY.

It is often alleged by Labour Party members that their party differs from the Liberals and Tories in that it is a workers' party.

If they mean by this to claim that Liberal and Tory supporters are, in the main, not workers, the facts are against them. At least 85 per cent. of the voters are members of the working class, and since the number of Labour voters at the 1929 General Election was only two-fifths of the total number who went to the poll, it is evident that there are more workers who vote Liberal and Tory than there are who vote Labour.

The *Daily Herald* used to claim that it was "the workers' paper." Now its posters proudly proclaim that—

"THE DAILY HERALD' PROTECTS THE INVESTOR."

In its City column, on March 13th, an article was published, telling a reader "how to Invest £12,000." Won't this be good news for unemployed miners, and railwaymen whose pay has just been reduced!

The *Daily Herald's* editorial on March 12th contains still more cheering news. It says:—

The investing public is, on the whole, doing remarkably well.

We ask readers who still support the Labour Party to think over that statement. Nearly two years after the Labour Party came into office, when the workers are suffering more than they have ever suffered, they are told as a fact that "the investing public . . . is doing remarkably well."

* * *

A WAR-TIME CURIOSITY.

The Leeds Conference.

The following passages are extracted from a circular letter sent out on May 23rd, 1917, by those responsible for the calling of the still-born Workers' and Soldiers'

Council which was to have been inaugurated at the Leeds Conference. It is interesting to observe that several of the signatories are now members of the Labour Government.

To Trades Councils, Trade Unions, Local Labour Parties, Socialist Parties, Women's Organisations, and Democratic Bodies.

Dear Comrades,—The conference to which we invited you is already assured of a great success. It will be one of the greatest democratic gatherings ever held in this country. It will be historic; it will begin a new era of democratic power in Great Britain. It will begin to do for this country what the Russian revolution has done for Russia. . . . It will be a democratic conference to establish democracy in Great Britain. Russia has called us to follow her. You must not refuse to answer that appeal. Send in your application for delegates' cards at once, etc.—On behalf of the United Socialist Council we remain, yours fraternally,

H. Alexander, Chas G. Ammon, W. C. Anderson, C. Despard, E. C. Fairchild, J. Finsberg, F. W. Jowett, Geo. Lansbury, J. Ramsay MacDonald, Tom Quelch, Robert Smillie, Philip Snowden, Robert Williams.

May 23rd, 1917.

* * *

THE DAILY HERALD'S TWO VOICES.

Daily Herald Editorial on December 10th, 1930:—

The man in the street, asked what is the cause of our present troubles, would be likely to answer, "There's not enough money about." The man in the street would be largely right. The world is not . . . producing enough gold for its needs. . . . Shortage of gold means shortage of currency. Shortage of currency means shortage of purchasing power.

Daily Herald Editorial, January 20th, 1931:—

The pessimists received a further blow yesterday when a £3,000,000 issue of new debenture stock by the London Power Company . . . was oversubscribed within a few minutes. Here is evidence in plenty that there is in this country money available for sound schemes. . . . How can it be attracted into industry again? The sure way is by increasing public confidence in our industrial future, and by persuading the ordinary consumer to buy more of the goods which are on all sides being offered at reasonable prices.

It may be remarked that the over-subscription of public issues of shares was going on throughout the latter half of 1930. We wonder, too, whether the "ordinary consumer" who is asked to spend more includes the workers whose wages have been reduced while the Labour Government has been in office.

* * *

THE COTTON LOCK-OUT.

It is interesting to notice that the factor which induced the employers to withdraw the lock-out notices and abandon their intention to try to impose a further 12½ per cent. reduction in pay and an increase in hours was the refusal of the locked-out men and women to give their trade union officials power to enter into negotiations. *Reynolds's Illustrated News* (February 15th) says:—

What brought about the collapse of the lock-out undoubtedly was the firmness of the rank and file of the operatives.

Right from the beginning of the dispute they have resolutely refused to give their Trade Union leaders power to negotiate with the employers, and have held out for the complete ending of the more-looms system.

The Socialist Party has always pointed out the danger which arises from the practice of giving the officials power to negotiate in secret with the employers.

* * *

UNEMPLOYMENT IN FRANCE.

A Blow to the Birth-Controllers.

Last year the publishers of the *New Generation* distributed (with the assistance of the *New Leader*) a leaflet by G. A. Gaskell and R. B. Kerr, M.A., LL.B., showing how birth control would abolish unemployment. France, they said, was the "one country . . . which is free from unemployment." France used to have unemployment, but birth control cured it. "Surely this is a magnificent achievement for birth control!" wrote the authors. Unfortunately for them, France hasn't got rid of unemployment. In the August, 1930, *SOCIALIST STANDARD* we gave the reasons why France had temporarily escaped obvious unemployment, and prophesied that unemployment would soon appear.

Now we have some definite evidence on the subject. The special correspondent in France of the *News-Chronicle* wrote as follows (22nd December, 1930):—

No reliable unemployment figures are available, though the Government admits a slow, but steady, increase. M. Lenoir, the Secretary of the Confederation Generale du Travail, declares that the situation is serious and that the number of unemployed is increasing every day. "It is not," he adds, "seasonal unemployment. The workless are legion in the textile and metal industries of the North. . . . There is also a lot of short time everywhere."

Further evidence was given by Mr. H. J.

Greenwall, who was in France for the *Daily Express*. He wrote (January 13th, 1931):—

There are, at the moment, about a quarter of a million unemployed in France, while those on short time bring the figures up to about half a million.

The French representative at the recent Geneva Conference on unemployment admitted that there are in France 350,000 wholly unemployed and about 1,000,000 partly unemployed, *excluding* all firms employing under 100 persons (see *The Times*, February 7th). These figures were confirmed by the French Government. The Paris correspondent of *The Times* also reported that the census of 1921 showed 537,000 unemployed, and the census of 1926, 243,000. France is now faced with threatening strikes and lock-outs in several industries owing to attempts to reduce wages.

By the end of February, according to *The Times* (March 7th, 1931), unemployment had risen to at least 650,000, with a further 1,500,000 partly unemployed.

So much for birth control as a cure for unemployment and poverty.

* * *

MR. MAXTON'S ACROBATICS.

Mr. Maxton has often declared that the Labour Party is a capitalist party, but he always takes good care to keep inside that capitalist party, in the warm. The thought of being put out into the cold, where there are no political jobs going for the bright young men and women of the I.L.P., fills him and his supporters with the wildest alarm. He was taunted with this inconsistency at the Conference of the Scottish I.L.P. He said (*Forward*, January 17th):—

He had been told in the House of Commons that a man could not ride two horses. All I can say is that if you cannot ride two horses you have no right to be in the bloody circus. . . . Surely I, in the Left Wing, am entitled to my acrobatics, and to have one foot on the Labour official horse and the other on the fighting socialist horse.

A resolution to disaffiliate from the Labour Party was defeated by 112 votes to 25. Bold Mr. Maxton, riding his two horses as usual, "said he would not speak either for or against the resolution." This is how the "leaders" give a "lead" to their followers.

* * *

THE I.L.P. DROPS MEMBERS.

It was disclosed at the Conference of the Scottish I.L.P. that the number of Labour M.P.'s who are members of the I.L.P. has fallen to 156. A year ago, when the Party held its National Conference, it was stated in the Report to Conference that nearly 200 I.L.P. members were Labour M.P.'s. So that over 40 Labour M.P.'s have in a year decided that the I.L.P. can be of no further use as an aid to a political career. The I.L.P. still, however, counts as members a clear majority of the Labour M.P.'s.

It is interesting to notice how the membership of the I.L.P. has fallen in recent years. In February, 1925, according to the "Socialist Annual, 1925," published by the I.L.P., there were approximately 50,000 members and 1,028 branches. At the Conference in 1930 it was stated (*Manchester Guardian*, April 3rd, 1930) that the branches had fallen to 748. If the membership has fallen proportionately to the fall in branches, it would have been not more than 36,000 a year ago. The income from affiliation fees fell by over 40 per cent. between 1925 and 1929.

The Report of the National Administrative Council to the 1931 Conference shows a further decline. The branches now number 712, and affiliation fees have fallen to £1,523, as compared with £3,467 in the year ended January, 1926.

According to Mr. F. A. Ogg ("English Government and Politics," p. 541), the I.L.P. in 1914 had 60,000 members, and in 1927, when its book membership was 50,000, the actual paid-up membership was nearer 30,000.

* * *

THE WELL-TO-DO I.L.P.

The I.L.P. has objected to the Government's proposed Voting Bill because it is not sufficiently democratic. The I.L.P. put down several amendments, but we observe that neither they nor the Labour Party, the Liberal Party or the Tory Party, propose to abolish the clause which compels candidates to deposit £150. To find such deposits is a hard task for a party (such as our own) dependent on the spare cash of members of the working class. It is by no means difficult for the wealthy parties referred to above. The dependence of the

I.L.P. on well-to-do supporters is illustrated by their recently published appeal for funds. Four lists of subscribers have been issued up to February 20th. Out of a total amount of £1,169, no less than £709 was subscribed by only 14 persons. This included one donation of £250 and three donations of £100. Although the I.L.P. complains of dwindling funds, it is still able to count on well-to-do supporters.

* * *

CAPITALISM AND CLASS BARRIERS.

Defenders of capitalism are fond of pointing out that everyone has a chance of climbing to the top. The statistical department of the German Government has just conducted an inquiry to find out how many workers' sons have actually been able to climb into the ranks of the privileged class. An account of the inquiry was given in the *News-Chronicle* on December 10th, 1930.

It was found that there were only four workers' sons among 247 bankers, stock-brokers and big business men; two among 258 company directors; none among 122 big property owners; six among 203 actors, singers, theatrical managers; none among 300 political economists, etc.; and only about seven among 1,370 high Government and Municipal officials.

No daughter of a working man was found to have penetrated into the learned professions or big business circles.

H.

S.P.G.B. PROPAGANDA MEETINGS

LONDON DISTRICT.

Sunday . . . Tottenham, West Green Corner, 11.30 a.m.
Victoria Park, 11.30 a.m. and 3 p.m.
Clapham Common, 8 p.m.
Finsbury Park, 3 p.m.
Cock Hotel, East Ham, 7.30 p.m.
Paddington, Prince of Wales, 7.30 p.m.
Walworth, Liverpool Street, 11.30 a.m.
Saturday . . . Jolly Butchers Hill, 8 p.m.

Fill in and post to 42 Great Dover Street, London, S.E. 1, and get this paper regularly.

Please send me the "Socialist Standard" for 12 months, for which I enclose 2/6.

Name

Address

Commencing (Month).....

(If required only for 6 months, send 1/3).

BRANCH DIRECTORY.

- BATTERSEA**.—Sec., W. A. Devine, 2 Hanbury-rd., S.W.11. Branch meets Thursday, 8.30 p.m. at The Waiting Room, Latchmere Baths, entrance in Burns-road. Discussion second Thurs. in month.
- BECONTREE**.—Sec., Hy. Gratton, 4, Drummond Ave., Brooklands, Romford. Branch meets 1st and 3rd Wednesdays at 7.30, at above address.
- BIRMINGHAM**.—Sec., E. Jesper, 82, Rollason-rd., Erdington. Branch meets The Continental Cafe, Moor St., 1st and 3rd Sundays at 11 a.m.
- CENTRAL**.—Membership obtained only through the Ex. Committee. Applications to General Sec.
- EAST LONDON**.—Sec. W. Reynolds, 57, Weymouth Terrace, Hackney Rd. Branch meets every Friday at 8 p.m. at 141, Bow Road. Discussion after Branch business. Public invited.
- GLASGOW**.—Branch meets 2nd and 4th Fridays in month 8 p.m., at 118, Henderson Street, Glasgow, S.1. Sec., A. Shaw.
- HACKNEY**.—Branch meets Arcadian Cafe, 42, Amherst Road, Hackney, 1st and 3rd Fridays in month, 8 p.m., Discussions 9.30. Communication to Sec. at 21 Bridge Street, Homerton, E. 9.
- HULL**.—Branch meets 1st and 3rd Wednesdays in month at 15, Grosvenor Street, Beverley Road. Communications to M. V. Coupland at above address.
- ISLINGTON**.—All communications to N. A. Bishop, 39, Poynings Road, Highgate, N.19.
- LEYTON**.—Branch meets 8 p.m., Trades and Labour Hall, Grove House, High-rd., second Mondays in month.
- MANCHESTER**.—Sec., D McKenzie, 91, Rochdale Road, Middleton. Branch meets 2nd and 4th Mondays in month at 8.15 p.m., at Room 2, 183, Oxford Road, All Saints.
- PADDINGTON**. Branch meeting held on 2nd and 4th Fridays, 8 p.m., in room above the Co-operative Stores, 306, Kilburn Lane, W.9 (side door).
- SHEFFIELD**.—Branch meets 2nd and 4th Wednesdays 7.30 p.m., Room 5, Trades Hall, Charles Street. Public discussion after business. Secretary E. Boden, 74, Glenalmond Road.
- SOUTHEND-ON-SEA**.—Sec., J. Bird, 5, Wellington-avenue, Westcliffe-on-Sea.
- SOUTHWARK**.—Branch meets Fridays at 8 p.m., 42, Great Dover Street, S.E.1. Communications to Sec., at above address.
- TOOTING**.—Branch meets on the 2nd and 4th Thursday in the month at the Tooting Adult School, 971, Garratt Lane, S.W.17. Sec. (pro-tem), H. E. Hutchins, 174, Haydon's Road, South Wimbledon, S.W. 19.
- TOTTENHAM**.—Secretary, 18, Woodlands Park Rd., N.15. Branch meets 1st and 3rd Fridays each month, Room 2, Trades Hall, 7, Bruce Grove, Discussion after branch business. Public invited.
- WALTHAMSTOW**.—Sec. S. E. Williams, 64, Bloxhall-rd., Leyton, E.10. Branch meets at Workmen's Hall, High-st., every Monday.
- WATFORD**.—A. Lawson, Sec., 107, Kensington-avenue, Watford. Branch meets Mondays at 8.30 p.m. at Secretary's address.
- WEST HAM**.—Branch meets Thursdays at 8 p.m. at 167, Romford-rd., Stratford. Sec., P. Hallard, 22, Colegrave-rd., Stratford, E.

WOOD GREEN.—All communications to Sec., F. W. Godfrey, 71, Falkland Road, N. 8. Branch meets 2nd 2nd and 4th Wednesday in month at 8.30 p.m. at Stirling House, Stuart Crescent.

THE SOCIALIST PARTY OF GREAT BRITAIN.

OBJECT.—The establishment of a system of society based upon the common ownership and democratic control of the means and instruments for producing and distributing wealth by and in the interests of the whole community.

DECLARATION OF PRINCIPLES.

THE SOCIALIST PARTY of Great HOLDS— Britain

That society as at present constituted is based upon the ownership of the means of living (i.e., lands, factories, railways, etc.) by the capitalist or master class, and the consequent enslavement of the working class by whose labour alone wealth is produced.

That in society, therefore, there is an antagonism of interests, manifesting itself as a class struggle, between those who possess but do not produce and those who produce but do not possess.

That this antagonism can be abolished only by the emancipation of the working class from the domination of the master class, by the conversion into the common property of society of the means of production and distribution, and their democratic control by the whole people.

That as in the order of social evolution the working class is the last class to achieve its freedom, the emancipation of the working class will involve the emancipation of all mankind, without distinction of race or sex.

That this emancipation must be the work of the working class itself.

That as the machinery of government, including the armed forces of the nation, exists only to conserve the monopoly by the capitalist class of the wealth taken from the workers, the working class must organise consciously and politically for the conquest of the powers of government, national and local, in order that this machinery, including these forces, may be converted from an instrument of oppression into the agent of emancipation and the overthrow of privilege, aristocratic and plutocratic.

That as political parties are but the expression of class interests, and as the interest of the working class is diametrically opposed to the interests of all sections of the master class, the party seeking working-class emancipation must be hostile to every other party.

THE SOCIALIST PARTY of Great Britain, therefore, enters the field of political action determined to wage war against all other political parties, whether alleged labour or avowedly capitalist, and calls upon the members of the working class of this country to muster under its banner to the end that a speedy termination may be wrought to the system which deprives them of the fruits of their labour, and that poverty may give place to comfort, privilege to equality, and slavery to freedom.

Those agreeing with the above principles and desiring enrolment in the Party should apply for membership form to secretary of nearest branch or at Head Office.

THE Socialist Standard

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LONDON, MAY, 1931

[MONTHLY, TWOPENCE.

SOCIALISM AND SOCIAL REFORMS

It is not only the workers who, through Trade Union action, endeavour to place certain limits upon their exploitation by the capitalists. The State, which to-day exists for the purpose of preserving capitalism, is also compelled in the course of its activities to take such steps.

In the early days of the nineteenth century, when the modern factory system was still struggling with earlier methods of production (based on handicraft in its later phases), the workers were able to reap some slight advantage from the divisions among the exploiting class.

Thus the landed interest, organised in the Tory Party, passed the early Factory Acts; and the tradition developed that by supporting one party against the other the workers could gradually improve their conditions. With the further developments of industry, however, the wealthy manufacturers bought land, and the landlords in turn began to invest in industry, until to-day the division has practically ceased to exist. In addition, the manufacturers discovered by experience that the legal regulation of hours of labour and the curtailment of so-called sweating could be made to hit their poorer and less effectively equipped competitors more than themselves. Hence the Liberal Party eventually took a special interest in pushing through the type of measures which they had previously opposed, and a considerable section of the workers came to regard the Liberals as their friends. In proportion, however, as modern industry develops, the value of such measures to the workers declines. The less efficient workers are precipitated into the ranks of the unemployed through legislation fixing legal minimum wages, and thus their last state is worse than their first.

This brings to the fore another type of reform which arises from the growing mass of destitution at the bottom of the social scale. This destitution constitutes a standing incentive to crime and is, therefore, a constant source of expense to the public authorities and, through them, to the propertied class in whose interests they function. Following the break up of feudalism in this country, in the reigns of the Tudors, the ruling class cowed the destitute into submission by savage repression, but the peasants who, by various means, were driven off the land, continued to grow in number and eventually the Poor Law was instituted. During the eighteenth century the farmers relied on this to make up the wages of their labourers, and again in recent years miners and others have found it necessary to appeal to the parish even when in work. Coupled with the fact that the present-day volume of Poor Law relief had reduced many parishes to bankruptcy, this led to the demand by various sections of the property-owning class that the State should assume the burden of destitution. Hence we have Unemployment and Health Insurance, old age pensions, etc., designed to relieve the pressure on the local authorities and, incidentally, pacify the workers by removing the pauper stigma. Such measures, being organised on a national scale, spread the burden over the entire capitalist class, are more economical, and simplify the work of administration.

Nothing is easier than for astute politicians, whatever their label, to put these measures forward as being specially intended to benefit the workers. Yet the number of persons compelled to seek Poor Relief is vastly greater than it was before the War. It is thus evident that as a pre-

ventive of poverty these measures are considerably less helpful than Mrs. Partington's mop in dealing with the Atlantic.

Education, sanitation, and the supply of houses by public bodies are other reforms for which Liberal, Tory and Labour politicians claim credit; yet it is clear that the education received by the wage-slave's child merely fits him to follow in his father's footsteps as a wage-earner; sanitation removes the threat of epidemic disease which does not spare the wealthy; while cheaper housing enables the workers to accept lower wages. Taken all round, these measures are intended to raise the standard of efficiency on the part of the workers, and thus make them more productive of profit for their masters.

In order to finance these measures the State is obliged to levy increased taxation upon those who alone can bear it, the property owners; and again nothing is easier than for so-called Labour leaders and others to represent this taxation as "socialistic"—an attempt to equalise incomes. The fact that the wealth of the large capitalists increases out of all proportion to the increased taxation, and that it is only the small fry that get squeezed out, is coolly ignored.

In spite of generations of this type of State activity, the cost of keeping up the armed forces is overwhelmingly greater than that of the "social services." Thus the greater part of taxation goes not to "relieve" the workers, but to keep them in subjection.

Many self-styled leaders of the workers belonging to the Labour and Communist Parties will readily admit that reforms on similar lines to those outlined above will not solve the problem facing the workers, and that Socialism is the only solution. Yet they claim it is necessary for their parties to have such reforms upon their programme in order to gain working-class support and thus obtain political power. "The workers want something now!" we are told, the implication being that the workers' party should imitate the capitalist parties and make promises in order to catch votes. Such reasoning ignores the fact that a party which rises to power in such a manner can do nothing towards establishing Socialism.

Socialism cannot be imposed upon the workers from above. It is a system which implies their conscious recognition of its necessity. The workers cannot make the

means of life common property without being aware of what they are doing. A programme of reforms is, therefore, useless to a Socialist Party, even as a strategic weapon. The failures of "Labour" Governments, the world over, to make any appreciable difference to the workers' conditions bear eloquent testimony to the soundness of our claim that, so long as capitalism exists because it is accepted by the workers as a necessity, it will be run in the interests of the capitalist class, and not of their slaves.

Wherever we turn, the plausible tales of the "reformers" concerning the need of "something now" merely serve to hide from the workers the fact that, in spite of Trade Union and State action, their exploitation and degradation grow greater rather than less, and must continue to do so with every improvement in machinery, technique, and industrial organisation. The effects of the much-discussed rationalisation now proceeding in all advancing capitalist countries should make clear to all the trend of modern society.

The Socialist Party will not barter its support for any promise of reform. For, no matter whether these promises are made sincerely or not, we know that the immediate need of our class is emancipation, which can only be achieved through the establishment of Socialism. Our interests are opposed to the interests of all sections of the master-class without distinction; whether bankers or industrialists, landlords or commercial magnates, all participate in the fruits of our enslavement. All will unite, in the last resort, in defence of the system by which they live.

For the party of the working class, one course alone is open, and that involves unceasing hostility to all parties, no matter what their plea, who lend their aid to the administration of the existing social order and thus contribute, consciously or otherwise, to its maintenance. Our object is its overthrow, and to us political power is useless for any other purpose. With these facts clearly in mind, and conscious that economic development is our unshakable and inseparable ally, we call upon the workers of this country to muster under our banner.

E. B.

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ENGLAND'S PROSPERITY— INDIA'S POVERTY.

Viscount Rothermere has contributed a couple of articles to the "Evening News" (the first of which appeared on April 15th) under the heading "If we lose India—". The first article concludes as follows:

Nowhere in the world, therefore, is it brought home to one more vividly than in Portugal what India means to Britain.

Here is a country that was once, like ours, the proud Mistress of the Seas. She has now sunk to the third rank among the nations of Europe. What raised her to the first place was her connection with India. What brought about her downfall was its loss.

Yet at this very moment there are ignorant and weak-kneed politicians in England deliberately working to loosen our grasp on that historic key to National Greatness.

There is something to be said for the position put forward by Rothermere, though not perhaps in the way he intended. A good deal of the early accumulation of wealth in England that was converted into capital and helped to speed on the Industrial Revolution of the late 18th and early 19th Centuries was obtained by the wholesale plundering of India.

It had been the practice in India for all, from the highest to the lowest, to lay by the means to help tide over periods of famine. For this purpose what silver they came by was buried to be later dug up and used. When the Portuguese, French and English adventurers entered India, like Columbus in the New World, they found an Eldorado which they plundered to the best of their abilities; the last and most successful plunderers were the British. Brook Adams in "The Law of Civilization and Decay," writes: "Possibly since the world began, no investment has ever yielded the profit reaped from the Indian plunder, because for nearly fifty years, Great Britain stood without a competitor" (page 263). The way the booty was obtained is explained in some detail by Adams, from whom the following extracts are taken:

Upon the plundering of India there can be no better authority than Macaulay, who held high office at Calcutta when the administration of Hastings was still remembered; and who wrote more as a minister than as a historian. He has told how after Plassey "the shower of wealth" began to fall, and he has described Clive's own gains: "We may safely affirm that no Englishman who started with nothing has ever, in any line of life, created such a fortune at the early age of thirty-four." But the takings of Clive, either for himself or for the Govern-

ment, were trifling compared to the wholesale robbery and spoliation which followed his departure, when Bengal was surrendered a helpless prey to a myriad of greedy officials. These officials were absolute, irresponsible, and rapacious, and they emptied the private hoards. Their only thought was to wring some hundreds of thousands of pounds out of the natives as quickly as possible, and hurry home to display their wealth.

"Enormous fortunes were thus rapidly accumulated at Calcutta, while thirty millions of human beings were reduced to the extremity of wretchedness."

Thus treasure in oceans flowed into England through private hands, but in India the affairs of the Company (the East India Company) went from bad to worse. Misgovernment impoverished the people, the savings of long years of toil were exhausted, and when, in 1770, a drought brought famine, the resources of the people failed, and they perished by millions: "the very streets of Calcutta were blocked up by the dying and the dead." Then came an outbreak of wrath from disappointed stockholders: the landed interest seized its opportunity to attack Clive in Parliament; and the merchants chose Hastings to develop the resources of Hindustan.

Hastings was, indeed, a man fitted for the emergency, a statesman worthy to organise India on an economic basis. Able, bold, cool, and relentless, he grasped the situation at a glance, and never faltered in his purpose. If more treasure was to be wrung from the natives, force had to be used systematically. Though Bengal might be ruined, the hoards of neighbouring potentates remained safe, and these Hastings deliberately set himself to drain. Macaulay has explained his policy and the motives which actuated him.

How he (Hastings) obtained his money, the pledges he violated, and the blood he spilt, is known as few passages of history are known, for the story has been told by both Burke and Macaulay. How he robbed the Nabob of Bengal of half the income the Company had solemnly promised to pay, how he repudiated the revenue which the Government had covenanted to yield to the Mogul as a tribute for provinces ceded them, and how, in consideration of four hundred thousand pounds, he sent a brigade to slaughter the Rohillas, and placidly saw "their villages burned, their children butchered, and their women violated," has been described in one of the most popular essays in the language. At his impeachment, the heaviest charge against him was that based on his conduct towards the princesses of Oude, whom his creature, Asaph-al-Dowlah, imprisoned and starved, whose servants he tormented, and from whom he wrung at last twelve hundred thousand pounds as the price of blood. By these acts, and acts such as these, the treasure which had flowed to Europe through the extermination of the Peruvians was returned again to England from the hoards of the conquered Hindoos. (Pages 255-258.)

In 1901 a book by W. Digby was published entitled, "Prosperous British India." In this book, which runs to 650 pages, Digby presented a detailed record of the terrible story of India's connection with

Britain, and the woe it has brought to the Indian population. He points out that millions of pounds have been drained from India with no return whatever, and gives what he contends is a conservative estimate, that there were, at the beginning of the twentieth century, 70 million continually hungry people in British India (page 85). He points out "that the Pioneer, the ever-ready apologist for British rule in India . . . put the 'Indian people who are living in extreme poverty' at 'one hundred millions.'"

On page 7 the same writer states:

"230,000,000 out of 231,085,132 people in British India have an income, before any taxation is imposed, of only about 12s. per head per annum, or less than one halfpenny per head per day."

"Out of that 12s. at least 2s. 6d. are taken by way of taxation, or twenty per cent. of the total income."

Digby points to the ruthless exploitation of the peasantry by the Government through taxation which ultimately put many of them deep in the clutches of the moneylender, in illustration of which he writes:

In one district in 1900 85 per cent. of the land revenue was directly paid to the Government officials by moneylenders, the cultivators being wholly without means to fulfil their obligations, while the leading medical journal in the world (*The Lancet*, June, 1901) through its correspondent in Bombay, estimates that nineteen millions of British Indian subjects have, during the last decennium of the nineteenth century, died of starvation, and one million from plague. (Page 64.)

As an illustration of how the impoverishing of the people under British rule had lessened the power of resistance to the forces of nature, Digby points to the fact that while between 1800 and 1825 there were only four famines, between 1875 and 1900 there were twenty-two famines.

Digby supports his case by masses of evidence drawn from official sources.

Another writer, Dadabhai Naoroji, provides evidence of a similar kind in a book entitled, "Poverty and Un-British Rule in India." In 1928 Sir Stanley Reed writes, in "India: the new Phase," "The poverty of the Indian peasant still dominates the situation."

Such has been the nature and result of British exploitation in India. Is it any wonder that part of the population gives ready ear to those who urge (for their own private ends in the main) that India should rid itself of the foreign exploiters?

To obtain an idea of the forces of work in India at present, and to grasp what lies behind the Nationalist movement it is necessary to understand something of India's economic development, particularly during the last twenty years or so.

The following is a brief sketch to aid in understanding the present situation.

INDIA YESTERDAY.

The economic revolution in India began about the middle of the last century. Until then India was made up of village communities of varying sizes. The artisans were village servants paid in kind by the local community to supply its needs. What trading existed was almost entirely by barter. Money was very little used until the British Government demanded the payment of the Government assessments in cash. The export trade was very small. The chief factor that kept India in the village community stage for such a long period was its comparative isolation from the outside world owing to lack of transport facilities. Roads were few and in such poor condition that they were impassable during rainy periods. Except at a few places along one or two of the larger rivers, navigation offered little help to internal traffic.

In a few years all this was changed.

Indian cultivators produced cotton on a small scale from early times and some of the more refined fabrics were exported to Europe. With the cheapening of the cotton goods by the introduction of machinery in England, Indian products were unable to compete and the export declined. America was the principal source of England's new cotton up to the American Civil War in the 1860's. This event closed the ports of the Southern States to the export of cotton and produced a cotton famine in Lancashire. The eyes of English manufacturers immediately turned to India and feverish efforts were made to turn India into a cotton producing tributary of the Empire. In the '50's of the last century Lord Dalhousie was appointed Governor-General of India and at the instigation of the British Government he immediately set about ending India's economic isolation. Cotton commissioners were appointed and roads and railway construction was pushed forward.

A Public Works Department was formed. Thousands of labourers were recruited from among the agricultural labourers, the poorer cultivators, village artisans and the

weavers. The cotton cultivators were enabled to go ahead to meet the sudden tremendous demand for raw cotton as they were assured of security of tenure against the old village communal arrangement by the operation of the Land Settlement Act. Before 1860 a class of general casual labourers were practically unknown in India. After the new development schemes casual labour became a common feature of Indian life and the stagnation of centuries disappeared. Co-operative and forced labour of cultivators was replaced by wage labour.

The Government's activity in India rapidly bore fruit. The first line of railway was opened to traffic in 1854. By 1869 over 5,000 miles of railway were opened to traffic. Between 1859 and 1866 the price of cotton rose more than threefold and the quantity available for export to England more than doubled. It rose from half a million bales in 1859 to one and a quarter million bales in 1865.

For a few years the effect of the American Civil War, together with the discoveries of precious metals in Australia, California, and Mexico, with the consequent rise in prices made cotton growing a profitable industry to the cultivators of the Indian cotton trade. The end of the Civil War and the resumption of export by America brought about a sharp fall in the demand for Indian cotton and the position of the Indian cultivators suddenly became very bad. Many prominent Bombay merchants, who had risen on the tide of prosperity, failed. At the same time the benevolent Government, who wished to re-imburse itself for its expenditure on development works, taking the period of prosperity as normal, raised the assessments for revenue purposes and helped the ruin of the peasants, who were compelled to resort to borrowing to meet the increased demands.

In 1875 the Government of India entered on a policy of more and more expenditure in military expeditions and establishments, and as the money had to be found by the Indian population, the burden of taxation pressed more and more heavily on the mass of the people, and the grip of the money-lenders tightened. The resulting distress was greater than had previously been known by the Indian people and was one of the earliest of the "benefits" of British rule in India. Before the coming of the British, money-lending to cultivators was

checked by the restrictions on the transfer of lands and by the refusal of the superior powers to aid money-lenders in recovering debts. But the British had driven a nail into the coffin of the old communal system by permitting the transfer of land and its *absolute ownership*, which the cultivators had never possessed before. It had also introduced a judicial system which gave the money-lender a great power over the debtor, and a Limitation Act, making the renewal of the debt-bond in short periods compulsory. The debtor was practically reduced to the position of a serf, and the money-lender had a tight grip on his land. Thus commenced the gradual transfer of the lands of the peasants to the money-lenders. In 1879 "the condition of the agriculturist . . . was one bordering on extreme poverty" (see Endgil—"Industrial Evolution of India").

In the textile industries generally, as well as in the metal and other industries, the opening up of India by the improved transport facilities brought in the cheap products of the European manufacturers and ruined the finer industry of the village handicraftsman. With the extension of British rule over India, the easy flow of Indian life, interrupted, it is true, by periodical severe famines, was gone forever. India was drawn into the maelstrom of capitalist commerce and industry, and a large portion of its population was rapidly converted from co-operative cultivators and handicraftsmen into a replica of their Western brothers—wage-slaves. The opening up of the country had resulted in the killing of the native industry.

In the nineteenth century, European exploitation of Indian resources began with the introduction of indigo, tea and coffee plantations. These plantations were granted to Europeans and worked by Indian coolies drawn from different parts of India. During their transportation a large proportion of the coolies died, and when the others reached the gardens their miseries were aggravated by the ill-treatment of their employers. The early planting speculations exhibited familiar features of capitalist commercial investment. Land companies were formed, which sold land that existed in places impossible of cultivation. In many cases the surveying had been purely fanciful and the buyer found that the land he had bought in no way resembled the specifications, and was situated in a district

occupied by hostile tribes who would have very rapidly claimed his head if he had attempted to claim the land. After 1860, plantations sprang up everywhere.

Factory industry also commenced about this period and represents another of the "benefits" conferred on India by British rule. The cotton boom and the corresponding reckless floating of companies for all purposes was followed by the inevitable crisis and the collapse of credit in 1865. India was now experiencing for the first time the inevitable accompaniment of capitalist rule. Industry did not recover until 1871. By 1879 there were 56 cotton mills in India, employing 43,000 people, most of them situated in the Bombay district. In 1882 there were 20 jute mills, employing 20,000 people, nearly all of them in the vicinity of Calcutta.

Coal mining also began to grow along with the cotton and jute industries, and in 1880 employed 20,000 people.

The opening of the Suez Canal in 1869 was an important factor in the increase in India's export trade, and between 1880 and 1895 there was a tremendous increase in the export of Indian raw products.

By 1898 the number of cotton mills had risen to 144, and the people employed to 139,578. The export of Indian yarn rose from 26,704,716 lb. in 1879 to 170,518,804 lb. in 1890. In the jute industry and in coal mining there was a corresponding growth. The export of coal from India commenced in 1890, and by 1894 had reached nearly 54,000 tons. The tea industry was also rapidly growing, but the system of recruiting labour for it was denounced by a member of the Tea and Coal Labour Commission as a "vile pest to society."

Along with the growth of the commerce and industry there was also growing up a landless labour class, and in 1881 the first Factory Act was passed, against the opposition of the manufacturers. This Act only provided for the regulation of the working hours of children *below the age of twelve years. The working hours of children between seven and twelve years of age were limited to nine hours.* There were no sanitary provisions. The Act only applied to factories employing 100 or more hands and using mechanical power. Tea, coffee and indigo establishments were excluded from the operations of the Act.

The "benefits" of British rule in India were accumulating!

It is interesting to notice the movement in favour of Factory Acts in India was instigated by Lancashire and Dundee, who complained that they were subject to unfair competition of India on account of the lack of a Factory Act. A further Act was passed in 1891, which was a slight improvement and raised the minimum age limit for children to nine years of age. In coal mining there was no regulation at all and women were largely employed in this industry.

As usual, many of the provisions of the Act were ignored, and in some mills men, women and children worked from sunrise till sunset. The following quotation from Endgil gives a picture of the conditions at the time in the Kandesh industry:—

The evidence before the 1884 Factory Commission was of a terrible nature. One witness stated, "In the busy season—that is in March and April—the gins and presses sometimes work both night and day and the same set of hands work both night and day, with half-an-hour's rest in the evening. The same set continue working day and night for about eight days." It was all the worse because the hands were mostly women. Another witness stated: "The women are looked on as part of the gins, and they belong to the establishment, and two or three hours is the longest time they can be absent out of twenty-three without any notice being taken of it." After working eight days without stopping, "they (the gins) are compelled to get another set of hands from Bombay!" (Page 95.)

In Bombay the employers kept nearly three weeks' wages in hand and paid monthly.

In the coal mining industry in Bengal, women and children were employed extensively underground. GILMAC.

(To be continued.)

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CIVIL SERVANTS AND BONUS CUTS.

During and after the recent Great War, Civil Servants found that the wages and salaries paid to them as employees of the State were not, owing to the general rise in prices, sufficient to maintain them and their families in the same comfort they had been accustomed to. After much agitation and negotiations with the authorities, an agreement was entered into in 1920, by which an addition was made to the pre-war scales of pay according to the increased cost of living then existing. The bonus was to be increased or reduced as the cost of living should further rise or fall.

At the present time the cost of living is computed to be 52 per cent. over that of 1914.

Under the agreement the full bonus is only given on rates of pay not greater than 35s. per week. Rates in excess of that sum carry a bonus which is reduced proportionately as pay advances above 35s., so that, in these cases, the actual addition to pre-war rates varies from 46 per cent. to 16 per cent. on the higher scales of pay.

Civil Servants in receipt of basic pay exceeding 35s. weekly, and consequently diminishing bonus, therefore claim, not unreasonably, that their standard of living has been considerably lowered.

Considerable notice has been given in the daily press to the question and to the efforts of Civil Servants and of W. J. Brown, Labour M.P. for West Wolverhampton, to bring pressure to bear on the Government to suspend the operation of the agreement in reducing pay at the present time, but without success. A saving of three million pounds per annum in the wages of Civil Servants is indicated.

Civil Servants have been pleased by the quite unusual notice of the press given to their demands, which had not hitherto been so prominently brought before the public. It is probable that this is not so much due to sympathy with the efforts put forth, as to the impression desired to be made on other sections of the workers whose pay is at present the object of attack by the master class, such as school teachers, bank employees, and others.

The facts of the situation should be closely considered by Civil Servants. On the whole, as is also the case with school teachers and similar employees, they are

reluctant to identify themselves with the working class, regarding themselves as superior and holding themselves aloof as forming part of a middle class. The fiction of a middle class is encouraged by the capitalist class in order that this aloofness may keep them politically separate from the working class. The very fact that the current discontent in their ranks is based upon the inadequate remuneration given to them in return for the work performed, is plain proof that they are dependent upon their earnings for their maintenance. This condition of society is essentially one that puts its seal upon the working class who, having no means of living of their own, must sell their labour power to an employer in order to obtain the means of living, the employer in this instance being the State.

The remuneration they receive is based upon the necessary cost of their maintenance as Civil Servants and the rearing of a family in like circumstances. Under the present capitalist system of society there is always a tendency to depress their standard of living to a minimum. This it is from which they are now suffering. As in outside working class ranks they have been compelled to form their unions in order to maintain and forward their interests, as opposed to the attempts of their employer, the State, to lower their status and standard of living.

What is here pointed out should help Civil Servants to realise their position in Society, and also that, in order to reap the full benefit of their labour, they should unite with all other sections of the working class to overthrow the capitalism system and to establish the Socialist Commonwealth. F. J. H.

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EAST LONDON.

East London Branch now meets at 7.30 p.m. in the Committee Room at Limehouse Library, Commercial Road, E. Lectures are given on alternate Thursdays. Admission free. Non-members invited.

OFFICIAL NOTICE.

All communications for the Executive Committee, Subscriptions for the *SOCIALIST STANDARD*, Articles, and Correspondence submitted for insertion therein, should be addressed—The Socialist Party of Great Britain, 42, Great Dover Street, London, S.E.1, to whom Money Orders should be made payable.

The meetings of the Executive Committee are held at the Head Office, every Tuesday, at 7.30 p.m.

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The Socialist Standard,

MAY,



1931

THE LABOUR PARTY DROPS
NATIONALISATION.

THE NEW "SOCIALISM."

It is not amazing that the Labour Party should alter its programme—that has happened often—but it is amazing that the chief item in the programme should be quietly replaced, and that the membership not only do not protest, but appear to be unaware of the substitution. The one thing the Labour Party and the I.L.P. have stood for since their earliest days has been nationalisation. No formal statement has been made about dropping it, and certainly no Conference, either of the Labour Party or the I.L.P. has ever endorsed a change of policy, but we now have Mr. Herbert Morrison, Minister of Transport, and Mr. W. Graham, President of the Board of Trade, calmly stating that nationalisation has been abandoned in favour of public corporations under "business" management.

Mr. Graham, President of the Board of Trade, speaking at a Labour demonstration at Stirling on January 30th, 1931, appealed for the support of the Liberal Party on the ground that "the industrial problem is now so grave that the old divisions of parties become meaningless" (*Times*, Jan. 31st).

He remarked on the tendency towards the formation of trusts, and said that

Liberals had opposed the Labour Party's proposals for nationalisation,

because they usually regarded it as management from Whitehall. No one now makes such a proposal. I am convinced that in the leading industries, and in due course in others, this trust concentration must shade into public corporation. In short, we must make a business proposition of this economic transition.

The *Liberal News-Chronicle* wrote approvingly of Mr. Graham's speech and accepted it as evidence that the Labour Party "is painfully and somewhat confusedly 'Liberalising' its policy" (quoted in *New Leader*, Feb. 6th).

Mr. Morrison's London Passenger Transport Bill proposes the grouping of London buses, trams and tubes under the control of a board of five members who are to be "persons who have had wide experience, and have shown capacity, in industry, commerce or finance, or in the conduct of public affairs" (Part I, Clause 1, par. 2). They are to be appointed by the Minister of Transport after consultation with the Treasury, but are not to be under any effective control by him. The kind of people Mr. Morrison has in mind is shown by a speech he made at a staff dinner of the London General Omnibus Company on March 26th, in which he paid tribute to the "ability, courage and initiative" with which Lord Ashfield had controlled the transport companies which he directs (*News-Chronicle*, March 27th). In fact, the trump card Morrison played in the debate in the House was to read a letter from Lord Ashfield, expressing his agreement with the main principle of the Bill.

Mr. Morrison said (*Hansard*, March 23rd, col. 63):—

With the exception of the independent omnibus proprietors, who have very much misunderstood the Bill, and possibly the London County Council . . . none of the existing transport undertakings have really challenged the fundamental economic and administrative basis upon which this Bill proceeds.

He quoted a Tory leaflet as follows:—"Mr. Morrison has sounded the death-knell of municipal Socialism and nationalisation."

In the course of his speech Mr. Morrison said:—

I then considered, but not for long, whether the new concern should be operated by a State Department. I have a great admiration for the civil service . . . but I have come to the conclusion that the old idea of Departmental nationalisation in the ordinary sense of the term is not the appropriate way for a great business undertaking of this kind. Therefore, I rejected

the idea of State Departmental management, and in that sense this Bill is not nineteenth century nationalisation. . . . Part of the new thought is my own, but part came from the right hon. gentleman, the late Minister of Transport, and part from members of the Liberal Party in their famous publication "Britain's Industrial Future."

At this point a Member of Parliament very pertinently interjected: "Is there any of your own?"

We would like to ask since when Mr. Morrison's new views have been the policy of the Labour Party. His statement does not square with the Labour Party's opposition to the handing over of the Government cable and wireless services to the "Imperial and International Communications Co." Does it foreshadow the denationalisation of the telegraphs, telephones and postal services?

Industrial News, published by the Trades Union Congress, contained the following (March 24th):—

Nationalisation, under a State Department, Mr. Herbert Morrison said, was a 19th century conception, and he did not think a vast business undertaking of the kind would be appropriate for politicians to manage. The solution of the problem is to set up a Business Board, which is not a political body or a State Department, and will not even be responsible to the Minister for its day-to-day actions, though he would be, of course, answerable to Parliament, on matters of policy. Salaries, fees and allowances for the Board will be fixed by the Minister; the Board itself will appoint the appropriate officers for the management of the undertaking; "and, indeed (said Mr. Morrison) we shall take over the officers and staffs of the existing transport undertakings."

Mr. E. F. Wise, of the I.L.P., described the Bill as "being as nearly as possible 'pure Socialism,'" and approved the abandonment of the nationalisation schemes that have been the stock-in-trade of the Labour Party and I.L.P. all these years (*Hansard*, March 23rd, col. 117).

Our position is clear. We have always opposed State capitalism or nationalisation on the ground that it alters the form but not the substance of capitalist ownership and control. The capitalists continue to receive their property incomes on their investments, with the added security which Government guaranteed bonds have as compared with company shares. But we were always told by Labour Party defenders that "nationalisation is Socialism," or, alternatively, that "nationalisation is an inevitable step towards Socialism." Now the "inevitable" has been quietly dropped in favour of a new "inevitable" which

Mr. Morrison has culled from the Liberals and Tories. The new capitalism is just as objectionable as the old, from a working-class standpoint.

One amusing consequence of the Bill is that the Tory capitalists who control the Common Council of the City of London are supporting Mr. Morrison (their interest, no doubt, being in the financial provisions of the scheme), while the Tories who control the London County Council (their chief interest being in the rates) are opposing him and are standing forth as defenders of municipal ownership. The Labour members on the L.C.C., who for years have told the workers to be proud of "their" municipal trams, are backing Morrison against the Tories (*Star*, Feb. 5th, and *Daily Telegraph*, April 1st).

The change of policy has been carried through so discreetly that even some of the Labour Party "intellectuals" have been caught napping, although they are notoriously quick at trimming to any new wind that blows. Professor Laski, who has of late given less attention to misrepresenting Marx in order to write popular potted biographies for Odham's *Daily Herald*, dealt on April 4th with President Hoover, of the U.S.A. Laski usually has his ear very close to the ground, but on this occasion he was several weeks behind the times. While Morrison and his I.L.P. supporters were proclaiming the new creed of salvation through control by business men, Laski was writing that Hoover's outlook is "pathetic" "because the creed that business men are the salvation of mankind has so completely broken down."

KNOWLEDGE.

The following Books can be obtained from Head Office.
post free:—

Anarchism and Socialism. Plechanoff. 2/9.

Capital (vols. i., ii. and iii.) 10/6 per volume.

Communist Manifesto and Civil War in France (In one vol.) Marx and Engels. 2/9.

Critique of Political Economy Marx. 5/6.

Condition of the Working Class in England in 1844. Engels. 5/3.

18th Brumaire of Louis Napoleon. Marx. 2/9.

Evolution of Property. Lafargue. 2/9.

Origin of the Family, Private Property and the State. Engels. 2/9.

Revolution and Counter-Revolution. Marx. 2/9.

Social and Philosophical Studies. Lafargue. 2/9.

Socialism: Utopian and Scientific. Engels. 2/9.

Theoretical System of Karl Marx. Boudin. 5/6.

Value, Price and Profit. Marx. 2/9 (cloth).

Other books useful to students can also be obtained from the Head Office.

COMRADE MacHAFFIE.

It is with great regret that we record the death of Comrade W. E. MacHaffie (Mac), of the East London Branch, at the age of 47 years, on Thursday, March 12th.

Comrade MacHaffie joined the Party shortly before the outbreak of war in 1914. As a result of his activities during the War he came into conflict with the authorities and was sent to prison. Later, during transfer from one prison to another, he escaped. From that time began a struggle against odds which finally defeated him and undoubtedly shortened his life. The necessity of keeping "on the run" to avoid arrest, the difficulty of obtaining food because of the Government's rationing schemes, and lack of money finally reduced him to a shadow of his former self. Early in 1918, starvation, accompanied by a tubercular disease which he had developed, compelled him, after nearly four years of struggle, to give himself up to the police. From that time his life was constantly interrupted by periods of hospital and sanatorium treatment. Never willing to believe that he was really ill, he invariably discharged himself from these institutions as soon as he was physically capable of walking out, causing much consternation to the hospital authorities thereby. A few days before his death he assured the writer, who expressed concern at his deathly appearance, that he would improve in health with the arrival of the finer weather.

He could never be persuaded to take any part in the Head Office side of the Party's work. He was a "branch man," and was perhaps almost unknown by many with long service in the Party. Essentially a propagandist and educationist, he was impatient with cant and timidity of thought. Yet with patient skill he would spend hours explaining complex points to younger members of the branch he did so much to form, and encouraging them to do the work his health prevented him from doing.

He was a powerful and feared opponent; a kindly and generous friend; a fountain of knowledge and an almost inexhaustible source of information to hundreds who had come in contact with him inside and outside of the Party.

He will be gratefully remembered for a long time to come by those who knew him.

H. W.

THE SOCIALIST FORUM.**THE PRICE OF GOLD.**

A Canadian reader asks if the price of gold fluctuates.

When the value of commodities is expressed in the form of money, that is their price. Money itself, therefore, has no price, since it would be meaningless to express the value of one sovereign's worth of gold as being equal to one sovereign. When gold is the money commodity, the price of gold is a fixed relationship between gold as bullion and the unit of currency. For example, if the pound sterling were defined by law as a quarter of an ounce of pure gold, then an ounce would always be worth £4 (putting aside questions of the cost of coining, melting, transporting, and insuring, etc.). Actually, the pound sterling is fixed by law at a quantity and quality of gold which makes an ounce (troy weight) of gold of standard fineness worth £3 17s. 10½d.; and makes pure gold worth £4 4s. 11½d. an ounce. Given that the coin is convertible into metal and vice versa, then the price of gold cannot depart from the fixed price except to the extent of the cost of melting, transporting, insuring, etc. Thus, on March 31st, of this year, owing to gold coming into the London market in excess of demand, the price fell from £4 4s. 10½d. to £4 4s. 9½d., the lowest price for five years.

If gold were not the money commodity, then its price could fluctuate in just the same way as the prices of other commodities. When gold is the money commodity, changes in the value of gold (due to changes in the amount of labour necessary to produce it) have the effect of changing the prices of all other commodities. Thus, a fall in the cost of producing gold would cause a rise in prices generally. But if gold were not the money commodity, its price would be expressed in the money commodity and could fluctuate just as if it were wheat, or boots, or silver. The money unit may be paper money not convertible into a precious metal, as in Germany and elsewhere after the War. If, in such circumstances, the Government issues paper money in large quantities in order to pay its way, inflation causes all prices to rise. Everyone tries to hold goods, and to get rid of paper money whose purchasing power falls from day to day.

Then the paper money price of gold soars with the soaring prices of other commodities.

PRACTICAL POLITICS.

A reader points to the extraordinary confusion that exists in the minds of the workers, and asks how we propose ever to get them to take a different line from the one they now follow, unless we are prepared to participate actively in the political side of public affairs.

The answer is, that whatever our wishes on the subject may be, we have not the choice which our correspondent assumes is within our reach. He assumes that we can, if we wish, participate in what its defenders call "practical politics," and at the same time continue with our Socialist propaganda, instead of concentrating on the latter only. But the two things are not compatible. If the sort of "practical" work carried on by the reformist organisations like the Labour Party were to lead anywhere, it would kill all interest in Socialism, and rightly so. The workers would quite well see that if reforms of capitalism can solve their problems, there would be no need even to consider the possibility of setting up a different system of society. But this "practical" work does not lead anywhere and solves none of the real problems. That is the strength of our case. Sooner or later, the workers will tire of solutions that do not solve and improvements that do not improve, and will turn to consider something else. As that occurs, the Society Party needs above all things that those workers who have formerly opposed us shall know that we never had any part whatever in the work of reforming the capitalist system.

THE POST OFFICE AND WAGES

A reader sends us a cutting from the *Daily Herald* (April 16th), in which it is stated that the Post Office has helped a Trade Union to obtain increases in wages totalling £4,000 a year for the employees of a firm engaged on Post Office contracts. This has been done under what is known as the "Fair Wages Clause," which requires contractors engaged on Government contracts to pay the recognised Trade Union or other standard rates of pay. Our correspondents asks, "What about it?" We do not know whether we are expected

to offer a bouquet to the Labour Government on this account. If so, we shall have to disappoint the expectation. The Labour Postmaster-General might very well turn his attention to his department. Civil servants, including the Post Office staff, have lost hundreds of thousands of pounds through the reductions in their cost-of-living bonus since the Labour Government came into office. Then there are the thousands of part-time workers in the Post Office, fully dependent on their Post Office pay for their living, many of whom are getting less than they would get as unemployed pay. Perhaps the firm of contractors concerned would like to give the Postmaster-General some points.

**THE QUESTION OF
REPUBLICANISM**

We are asked what is our view of Republicanism and of the Spanish revolution.

Our object as a Socialist Party is to get Socialism, and we are not much concerned with the question which is the better way of running capitalism, by means of a monarchy or by means of a republic. The purpose in both cases is, from the capitalist standpoint, to have a figure-head in whom the majority of the population will repose confidence. As far as the workers are concerned, it is a distinction without a difference. In Spain the capitalist system will be carried on in much the same way as before, and in the main by the same set of politicians. Our objection to Republican presidents is the same as our objection to kings, i.e., that workers who still believe in the fiction that affairs are run by the titular heads of the republics or monarchies are not yet fit to take on the responsible task of understanding political and social problems themselves and of organising to control affairs collectively in their interests as a class.

THE £150 ELECTION DEPOSIT.

A reader asks if we would favour the abolition of the £150 deposit which Parliamentary candidates have to find before being allowed to run, and if Socialists in Parliament would try to secure its abolition.

The first point to consider is whether or not the obligation to deposit £150 is a barrier to the spread of Socialist knowledge. It certainly is true that the present

law does prevent the Socialist Party from running candidates at Parliamentary elections, but the importance of this disability must not be exaggerated. If there were any constituency in which Socialists had become so numerous that they were somewhere in the neighbourhood of a majority, there would be no risk of losing the money and the problem of finding £150 for a few weeks would not be insuperable. The extent of the disability is, therefore, that we are at present deprived of an opportunity of putting forward a candidate and thus making the most effective use of the elections for propaganda purposes.

The second point concerns the actions of Socialists in the House of Commons towards the abolition of the present restriction. But surely it begs the question, since the Socialists in Parliament could only have got there by showing that the obstacle of the deposit can be surmounted. By that time some of the capitalist parties will, perhaps, be feeling the pinch and want the deposit abolished, not for our sake, but for their own.

WILL DIXON (New South Wales).—Many thanks for the cuttings and election addresses. Why not get in touch with the Socialist Party of Australia, at Box 1440, P.O., Elizabeth Street, Melbourne?

ED. COMM.

ELECTION ADDRESSES WANTED.

Readers are asked to send us copies of election addresses issued by candidates of the various parties at parliamentary elections, both general elections and by-elections. Please address to Editorial Committee, 42 Great Dover Street, London, S.E. 1.

NOTICE TO READERS.

DISPLAY OF POSTERS.

In order to increase our circulation we would like to hear from readers who are willing to display our poster in a suitable position and to sell the "Socialist Standard." Address communications to the Literature Secretary, 42 Great Dover Street, S.E. 1.

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48 pages. TWOPENCE. 2½d. post free.

A SOCIALIST SEARCHLIGHT.

IS BRITISH CAPITALISM PLAYED OUT?

Since the War, politicians from Conservative to Communist have joined with business men and economic experts to harp on the theme that British capitalism was on the verge of collapse. They pointed to growing unemployment and the decline in the volume of exports and imports as proof that the industries of this country were being strangled. The Communists assured us that the end was only a matter of time. They repeatedly prophesied the early outbreak of the revolution at the "psychological moment." Like Bottomley, who always promised that the War would be over by Christmas, the Communists pinned their faith each year to the cold weather which would drive the unemployed to desperation when winter came. In the meantime they went on sharpening up the knuckle-dusters with which they were going to attack the armed forces. We of the Socialist Party said all along that the "facts" on which they based their case were largely fiction, and that their theories were all nonsense. A consideration of the growth of the total income of the country year by year, side by side with declining exports, shows in unmistakable fashion that we were right.

Year.	(1) National Income. Millions. £	(2) Imports. Millions. £	(3) Exports. Millions. £
1913 ...	2,300	769	635
1924 ...	4,250	1,277	941
1925 ...	4,150	1,321	927
1926 ...	3,800	1,241	779
1927 ...	4,350	1,218	832
1928 ...	4,250	1,196	844
1929 ...	4,400	1,221	839
1930 ...	4,000	1,045	658

The figures in Column (1) are taken from the *Economist* Budget Supplement of April 18th, 1931. It may be remarked, however, that, according to a rough estimate by Professor Bowley, communicated in a letter to *The Times* written by Sir Herbert Samuel (Dec. 1st, 1930), the 1930 National Income might be as much as £100,000,000 above the 1924 level; at the worst, it would not fall below 1924 by more than £200 millions.

The figures in Columns (2) and (3) are taken from the Statistical Abstract, 74th number, 1931, page 312. The figure for 1930 is taken from an official summary published in *The Times*, Feb. 26th, 1931.

It will be observed that although exports are now down to the pre-war level (after having been well above it owing to the increase in prices), the total national income is not far short of double the amount it was in 1914. During the last two or three years, especially in 1930, the volume of goods and services represented by the national income has grown larger without the money value growing proportionately, this being due to the heavy fall in prices. Sir Walter Layton, Editor of the *Economist*, says that the national production increased nearly 12 per cent. between 1924 and 1929 (*Times*, March 31st, 1931).

It is evident that technical changes and new tariff policies in the different countries have altered the conditions of world trade. The mistake the Communists made was in assuming that the British and other capitalists would not be able to adjust their industries accordingly. They have made the adjustments and, in this country at least, are richer than ever they have been, and still securely fixed in the saddle. Capitalism has its problems now, just as it had them before the War, but so long as the workers are content to put up with the capitalist system and go on voting the control of the political machinery into the hands of the parties which will use that control for the purpose of guarding capitalism, just so long will capitalism continue in being. Even had the Communists been right about the decline of the British capitalists, they overlooked the fact that the decline of Britain as a capitalist power would only mean the rise of other capitalist powers in its place. So lacking in a correct understanding were the Communists, that they helped to make that alternative more likely by lending their aid to the capitalist movements in India, China, Egypt, and elsewhere, under the mistaken impression that the native capitalists who control the "nationalist" movements desire to work or can be compelled to work for Socialism.

* * *

MR. HICKS SOLVES THE UNEMPLOYMENT PROBLEM.

In his election address (see *Daily Herald*, April 1st), Mr. George Hicks, the success-

ful Labour candidate at the recent by-election in East Woolwich, claimed with pride that the Labour Government are employing more men at the Arsenal than had been employed there by the Tory Government! But it is disclosed that this "increase" had been achieved simply by having more Government work done at the Arsenal, and less done at private yards. So that the employment of more men in one place will have been balanced by the dismissal of a similar number elsewhere. Mr. Hicks's solution for unemployment is in line with the Cabinet's attempt last year to boost the sale of cotton fabrics (at the expense of artificial silk), and the suggestion that the over-production of wheat can be met by persuading Orientals to eat more wheat (and less rice).

If the reports of his speeches in the *Daily Herald* are to be believed, Mr. Hicks talked more nonsense than one is accustomed to receive even from the most ill-informed or insincere of Labour candidates. In view of the fact that Mr. Hicks (once a member of the S.P.G.B.) claimed in public debate with a Communist, in 1921, that he still accepted the principles of this Party, it would be instructive if we could be told what events have sufficed since 1921 to cause Mr. Hicks to abandon the position he then held. There is a vast gulf between the belief that only Socialism can solve the workers' problems, and Mr. Hicks's present desire "to maintain the high traditions set by Will Crooks" (*Daily Herald*, April 1st). Perhaps Mr. Hicks was combining the serious personal business of getting into Parliament at all costs with a misplaced April fool joke at the expense of the electorate.

* * *

GETTING WITH THE MASSES.

The Communists have always talked a great deal about the necessity of getting with the masses, and have criticised the Socialist Party because, as they truly allege, we have attached more importance to the preaching of sound principles than to attracting the support of non-Socialists. It is instructive to learn from one of their prominent members, Mr. Arthur Horner, that the Communist tactics secure for them not the approval, but the hostility of the workers. Horner, in a letter to Moscow (see *Daily Worker*, March 10, 1931), states that the setting up of Communist strike

committees during the recent mining dispute in South Wales resulted "only in our isolation," the miners preferring their own elected officials and committees. He says that the Communist movement showed itself, both nationally and in South Wales, "effectively bankrupt from every angle."

Horner was called sharply to order, and it was at first reported that he and Mr. J. Tanner were to form a new Communist Party, less given to wrecking tactics. It now appears that they are to be received back into the Communist Party.

COMIC RELIEF AT THE I.L.P. CONFERENCE.

The National Council of the I.L.P. decided that their members must not belong to the Mosley Party, and the Conference passed a resolution rejecting "with disdain the quack remedies of the Labour Government and Messrs. Lloyd George and Oswald Mosley" (*Manchester Guardian*, April 7th). Yet Mr. John Paton, Secretary of the I.L.P., writing to the *New Statesman* about a fortnight earlier, said that the Mosley programme had been borrowed to a large extent from the living wage programme of the I.L.P. At least three of the M.P.'s who drafted the Mosley programme were members of the I.L.P. at the time. And although the I.L.P. Conference thus repudiates the quack remedies of the Labour Government and of Mr. Lloyd George, it is I.L.P. members in the House of Commons who form a majority of the Parliamentary Labour Party and permit these "quack remedies," and permit the holding of office on terms satisfactory to Lloyd George.

One of the funniest incidents was a protest by a delegate (Mr. Southall) against Gandhi entering into negotiations "with the Imperialist leaders whilst still leaving so many of the Indian leaders in prison" (*Manchester Guardian*, April 8th). The joke of it is that the "Imperialist leaders" are all of them the nominees of the Labour Government, which is kept in office by I.L.P. members in Parliament. The Secretary for India, Mr. Wedgwood Benn, is one of the I.L.P.'s own M.P.'s. How was Mr. Gandhi to know that Mr. Southall did not want him to enter into negotiations with the people who are elected to Parliament with the assistance of Mr. Southall and his party?

FORWARD AND THE S.P.G.B.

Mr. Emrys Hughes, who edits the Scottish I.L.P. journal, *Forward*, has been warning the I.L.P. to avoid becoming "an anti everybody and everything organisation like the S.P.G.B." Mr. Hughes has fallen into error through taking a superficial view of things. He notices that we oppose the Liberals and Tories, the Labour Party, the I.L.P., and the Communists, but he has not noticed that one reason applies to each of these parties. We do not pretend that they are alike in all respects, but we do claim that each of them is prepared to retain capitalism, either as it now is or reformed to a greater or less degree. Since each of the three so-called Labour organisations find themselves advocating similar reforms and voting at elections for the same candidates, our opposition to one naturally involves our opposition to the others also. We have only one object, which is the replacement of capitalism by Socialism.

If Mr. Hughes would study the question further from another angle, he would recall one or two respects in which our capacity for being anti-everything falls short of the I.L.P.'s capacities in the same direction. For example, the S.P.G.B. has not achieved the distinction of being opposed to itself, whereas Mr. Hughes is constantly pointing out to his own opponents inside his own party that it is absurd for them to go on denouncing the Labour Government (including the I.L.P. members of it) and yet remain affiliated. He has also ridiculed the absurdity of there being three I.L.P. Parliamentary parties—first the group of 140 I.L.P. members in Parliament, then the group of about 30 M.P.'s for whom the I.L.P. was responsible at the last election, and lastly the group of about a dozen who have consented to accept the rulings of the Maxtonites. Mr. Hughes would recall that the S.P.G.B. remained Socialist during the War, instead of following MacDonald, Keir Hardie, and other prominent members of the I.L.P. into the anti-German recruiting campaign. Mr. Hughes will remember, too, that readers of *Forward* during the War were treated to the entertaining spectacle week by week of fervid anti-German articles from one jingoistic regular contributor, while the Editor attacked him and apologised for him in other columns.

Lastly, we would remind Mr. Hughes that, however anti-everything we may be,

Forward has taken care that its readers shall not learn in its columns our justification for attacks we make. On July 14th, 1928, *Forward* described as "nonsense" our assertion that Keir Hardie boasted in 1914 of the number of recruits he had enrolled for the capitalist war. We promptly asked *Forward* to allow us space to give our evidence for the assertion. We are still waiting for *Forward's* reply.

THE PROMISE OF EMPIRE FREE TRADE.

It is worth recording that the destitution which now exists in Protectionist America is what the Empire Free Traders promise to copy.

Viscount Rothermere, writing in the *Sunday Dispatch* on February 23rd, 1930, gave an undertaking that five years after the achievement of Empire Free Trade, "*Great Britain will be as prosperous as the United States.*"

On December 17th, 1929, the *Evening News*, Rothermere's paper, in an editorial said:—

The world has never been without poverty . . . in the U.S.A., to-day, the richest nation in material wealth that the world has ever known, there is plenty of it—not relative poverty merely, but want and destitution.

On February 2nd, 1931, the *Telegraph's* special correspondent in New York, Mr. Percy S. Bullen, gave a review of unemployment in U.S.A. He said:—

In all my experience I have never seen such want as exists here to-day. . . . There is more misery to the square mile to-day in the great American Metropolis than in any city abroad.

He thought 9,000,000 unemployed an exaggeration, but put it at between 4 million and 6 million.

He quoted Senator T. H. Caraway as saying that 1,000 persons die of starvation every day in the U.S.A.

THE CO-OPERATORS SET AN EXAMPLE.

We are often told that the Co-operative dividend hunters set an example to the other employers. This is true. The Co-operative Societies in the North-Western Area are asking for the following alterations in their agreements with their 20,000 employees:—

Ten per cent. reduction for juniors.
Five per cent. reduction for adults.

A still heavier lowering of the minimum for branch managers.

Alteration of the period of payment for sickness from three weeks on full pay and three weeks on half pay to two weeks on full pay and two weeks on half pay in one full year.

Co-operative Societies in the North-Eastern Area, employing nearly another 10,000 workpeople, have also asked for the termination of the existing agreement.

The report is taken from the *Daily Herald*, April 10th. It will be recalled that Mr. Maxton wants the Co-operators to have a share in fixing a "living wage" for the workers.

STRAWS IN THE WIND.

The *Daily Herald* has lately begun the practice of describing Lloyd George and his Party as "Radicals," instead of "Liberals." Is it that an alliance with the Liberal Party is intolerable, while an alliance with the same party under another name is more likely to be accepted by the Labour rank and file?

S.P.G.B. PROPAGANDA MEETINGS

LONDON DISTRICT.

- Sunday** ... Tottenham, West Green Corner, 11.30 a.m.
Victoria Park, 11.30 a.m. and 4 p.m.
Walworth, Liverpool Street, 11.30 a.m.
Finsbury Park, 4 p.m.
Clapham Common, 6 p.m.
Cock Hotel, East Ham, 7.30 p.m.
Prince of Wales, Paddington, 7.30 p.m.
- Monday** ... Ridley Road, Dalston, E.8, 8 p.m.
Forfar Road, Battersea, S.W., 8 p.m.
- Wednesday** ... The Fountain, Forest Gate Station, 8 p.m.
Prince of Wales, Paddington, 8 p.m.
Stepney Green, E., 8 p.m.
- Thursday** ... Tottenham Road, Dalston, E.8, 3 p.m.
- Friday** ... Mossbury Road, Battersea, S.W., 8 p.m.
Prince of Wales, Paddington, 8 p.m.
- Saturday** ... Jolly Butchers Hill, Wood Green, 8 p.m.
Church Elm Corner, Dagenham, 7.30 p.m.

GLASGOW DISTRICT

- Sunday** ... West Regent Street, 8 p.m.
- Monday** ... Vulcan Street, Springburn, 8 p.m.
- Wednesday** ... Abbey Close, Paisley Cross, 8 p.m.
- Thursday** ... Raeberry Street, Maryhill, 8 p.m.

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BRANCH DIRECTORY.

- BATTERSEA**.—Sec., W. A. Devine, 2 Hanbury-rd., S.W.11. Branch meets Thursday, 8.30 p.m. at The Waiting Room, Latchmere Baths, entrance in Burns road. Discussion second Thurs. in month.
- BECONTREE**.—Sec., Hy. Gratton, 4, Drummond Ave., Brooklands, Romford. Branch meets 1st and 3rd Wednesdays at 7.30, at above address.
- BIRMINGHAM**.—Sec., E. Jesper, 32, Rollason-rd., Erdington. Branch meets The Continental Cafe, Moor St., 1st and 3rd Sundays at 11 a.m.
- CENTRAL**.—Membership obtained only through the Ex. Committee. Applications to General Sec.
- EAST LONDON**.—Sec. W. Reynolds, 57, Weymouth Terrace, Hackney Rd. Branch meets every Thursday, at 7.30 p.m., at Limehouse Library (Committee Room), Commercial Road, E. Lectures on alternate Thursdays. Public invited.
- GLASGOW**.—Branch meets 2nd and 4th Fridays in month 8 p.m., at 118, Henderson Street, Glasgow, S.1. Sec., A. Shaw.
- HACKNEY**.—Branch meets Arcadian Cafe, 42, Amherst Road, Hackney, 1st and 3rd Fridays in month, 8 p.m., Discussions 9.30. Communication to Sec. at 21 Bridge Street, Homerton, E. 9.
- HULL**.—Branch meets 1st and 3rd Wednesdays in month at 15, Grosvenor Street, Beverley Road. Communications to M. V. Coupland at above address.
- ISLINGTON**.—All communications to N. A. Bishop, 39, Poyning Road, Highgate, N.19.
- LEYTON**.—Branch meets 8 p.m., Trades and Labour Hall, Grove House, High-rd., second Mondays in month.
- MANCHESTER**.—Sec., D McKenzie, 91, Rochdale Road, Middleton. Branch meets 2nd and 4th Mondays in month at 8.15 p.m., at Room 2, 183, Oxford Road, All Saints.
- PADDINGTON**. Branch meeting held on 2nd and 4th Fridays, 8 p.m., in room above the Co-operative Stores, 306, Kilburn Lane, W.9 (side door).
- SHEFFIELD**.—Branch meets 2nd and 4th Wednesdays 7.30 p.m., Room 5, Trades Hall, Charles Street. Public discussion after business. Secretary E. Boden, 74, Glenalmond Road.
- SOUTHEND-ON-SEA**.—Sec., J. Bird, 5, Wellington-avenue, Westcliffe-on-Sea.
- SOUTHWARK**.—Branch meets Fridays at 8 p.m., 42, Great Dover Street, S.E.1. Communications to Sec., at above address.
- TOOTING**.—Branch meets on the 2nd and 4th Thursday in the month at the Tooting Adult School, 971, Garratt Lane, S.W.17. Sec. (pro-tem), H. E. Hutchins, 174, Haydon's Road, South Wimbledon, S.W. 19.
- TOTTENHAM**.—Secretary, 18, Woodlands Park Rd., N.15. Branch meets 1st and 3rd Fridays each month, Room 2, Trades Hall, 7, Bruce Grove, Discussion after branch business. Public invited.
- WALTHAMSTOW**.—Sec. S. E. Williams, 64, Bloxhall-rd., Leyton, E.10. Branch meets at Workmen's Hall, High-st., 2nd and 4th Mondays each month.
- WATFORD**.—A. Lawson, Sec., 107, Kensington-avenue, Watford. Branch meets Mondays at 8.30 p.m. at Secretary's address.
- WEST HAM**.—Branch meets Thursdays at 8 p.m. at 167, Romford-rd., Stratford. Sec., P. Hallard, 22, Colegrave-rd., Stratford, E.

WOOD GREEN.—All communications to Sec., F. W. Godfrey, 71, Falkland Road, N. 8. Branch meets 2nd and 4th Wednesday in month at 8.30 p.m. at Stirling House, Stuart Crescent.

THE SOCIALIST PARTY OF GREAT BRITAIN.

OBJECT.—The establishment of a system of society based upon the common ownership and democratic control of the means and instruments for producing and distributing wealth by and in the interests of the whole community.

DECLARATION OF PRINCIPLES.

THE SOCIALIST PARTY of Great HOLDS— Britain

That society as at present constituted is based upon the ownership of the means of living (i.e., lands, factories, railways, etc.) by the capitalist or master class, and the consequent enslavement of the working class by whose labour alone wealth is produced.

That in society, therefore, there is an antagonism of interests, manifesting itself as a class struggle, between those who possess but do not produce and those who produce but do not possess.

That this antagonism can be abolished only by the emancipation of the working class from the domination of the master class, by the conversion into the common property of society of the means of production and distribution, and their democratic control by the whole people.

That as in the order of social evolution the working class is the last class to achieve its freedom, the emancipation of the working class will involve the emancipation of all mankind, without distinction of race or sex.

That this emancipation must be the work of the working class itself.

That as the machinery of government, including the armed forces of the nation, exists only to conserve the monopoly by the capitalist class of the wealth taken from the workers, the working class must organise consciously and politically for the conquest of the powers of government, national and local, in order that this machinery, including these forces, may be converted from an instrument of oppression into the agent of emancipation and the overthrow of privilege, aristocratic and plutocratic.

That as political parties are but the expression of class interests, and as the interest of the working class is diametrically opposed to the interests of all sections of the master class, the party seeking working-class emancipation must be hostile to every other party.

THE SOCIALIST PARTY of Great Britain, therefore, enters the field of political action determined to wage war against all other political parties, whether alleged labour or avowedly capitalist, and calls upon the members of the working class of this country to muster under its banner to the end that a speedy termination may be wrought to the system which deprives them of the fruits of their labour, and that poverty may give place to comfort, privilege to equality, and slavery to freedom.

Those agreeing with the above principles and desiring enrolment in the Party should apply for membership form to secretary of nearest branch or at Head Office.

THE Socialist Standard

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LONDON, JUNE, 1931

[MONTHLY, TWOPENCE.]

WHAT IS THE CLASS STRUGGLE?

Probably no phrase used by Socialists is the subject of more misunderstanding and misrepresentation than "the class struggle." The professional "anti-Socialists," who trade upon the fears of the "small investors," do not tire of horrifying their patrons with the imaginary spectacle of a horde of strikers and unemployed raiding their peaceful homes; and the language frequently used by equally professional Communists lends a certain amount of colour to the conception of the class struggle as a physical conflict in the streets between roving bands of pugnacious individuals drawn from the two classes which form modern society. Yet nothing could be a greater travesty of the facts.

The class struggle is, at bottom, a conflict between the class of possessors who own the means of living and the class of producers who are exploited by them in the fields, mines, factories, and on the railroads, etc. The struggle at first takes the form of a series of strikes and lock-outs, by means of which the masters try to increase, and the workers try to limit, the extent of the exploitation. These skirmishes, which periodically interrupt the process of production under capitalism, centre round the terms upon which the workers part with their energy to their masters, *i.e.*, the amount of the wage, the length of the working day, and a host of minor conditions related thereto. Few workers are exempt from the necessity of thus debating with their employers the price of their commodity, *i.e.*, the power to labour, their only possession and source of maintenance. It forms a normal condition of their existence under the existing social order.

In spite of this, many workers still har-

bour the delusion that there is a harmony of interests between them and their masters, that it is up to them to produce more cheaply in order to help their masters to recover lost markets at home and abroad; and this delusion is fostered by many Trade Union leaders.

The other absurd extreme is represented by the professional Communists, who try to persuade us that strikes are the result simply of their agitation. When the discontent of the Trade Union rank and file reaches a certain height over a given question and the leaders "regretfully" call a strike, we witness the spectacle of the Communists telling the world that this is because of the fear with which they have inspired these leaders. They invariably forget, however, to let us know how it is that these leaders recover their courage. They are too busy denouncing them as traitors, to admit their own inability to prevent the strikers returning to work.

The class conflict is due neither to the weakness of the leaders nor to the schemes of the agitators. The decisive economic factor in a strike is the state of the labour market, which the constant progress of machinery and improved methods of production tend to turn more definitely against the workers. Treachery and stupidity aggravate the defeats which the workers repeatedly encounter, but even if their leaders (actual and would-be) were as loyal and intelligent as they are frequently the reverse, the main trend of economic development and its results would remain, broadly, the same as now.

This does not mean that the workers should abandon the struggle as hopeless; indeed, they cannot do so without being crushed beyond chance of recovery. It does,

however, impose upon them the need for studying the cause of the struggle and discovering new methods of dealing with it.

The struggle is contested at first upon the industrial field, but it does not end there. In fact, so long as the workers see no further than the need for sectional defensive tactics, there is nothing to prevent the struggle going on indefinitely to their disadvantage.

The possession of the means of living places an overwhelming advantage in the hands of the master class; but it is essential to realise that this possession depends upon conditions which it is possible for the workers to alter.

Possession, to-day, is no longer a physical relationship. It is a legal one. The shareholders of a joint stock company which owns a mine, a group of mills, or a railway system, may live at the ends of the earth, may never see their property, may know next to nothing about it, and yet go on receiving dividends upon which they can exist in comfort and luxury without labour. Superficial "revolutionaries," who advocate that the workers should "occupy" the factories, forget that the workers are continually doing this—they have to—and that the last thing in the world that the capitalists want to do is to occupy the factories themselves. Physical contact with the means of production is a pleasure which they are quite prepared to surrender entirely to the workers—on terms. They merely insist upon controlling, through salaried agents, the ownership and disposal of the products. When and where such sale ceases to be sufficiently profitable, they use their legal powers to lock the workers out; and, in either case, their ownership and control, whether exercised negatively or positively, depends upon the State.

It is the State, with its machinery of coercion, including the armed forces, which upholds the conditions condemning the workers to sell themselves piecemeal into lifelong slavery. It is the State that repels every attack upon the property rights of the master class by starving strikers or unemployed, and which, by doing so, makes the workers' struggle a political one.

For the masters' grip upon the State machine is the weakest link in the chain which binds the workers to the present system. It is a link which can be snapped whenever the workers as a class say the word. For generations in this country their

masters have flattered and wheedled and bribed them, and kissed their babies, in the endeavour to secure their political support. Encouraged by this, numerous leaders of the workers have adopted politics as a career, and have, to a considerable extent, relieved the masters of the need for administering governmental affairs directly, just as in the realm of industry the capitalists have long ago surrendered the task of supervising production to paid managers, foremen, etc. Just as the masters rely on a section of the workers to exploit the others on their behalf, so now, also, they entrust to Trade Union and political leaders the job of maintaining the system which makes that exploitation possible; but whereas the managers and foremen have little need to curry favour with their subordinates, the "Labour" politicians have reduced demagoguery to a fine art.

They know just where the shoe pinches, and can estimate to a nicety just how much to relieve the pressure in order to preserve in the minds of the workers the necessary degree of docility; but there are limits to their powers. While they may lull the unemployed by judicious adjustments here and there, they cannot prevent the increase in their numbers. They can do nothing to stop the process whereby the little security of livelihood which the mass of the workers enjoy is being constantly undermined. They can do nothing to prevent the speeding up of the workers in the factories, with the consequent increase in the accident rate. They admit that they cannot stop the attacks on wage standards already miserable enough.

They are of no real assistance to the workers in the struggle, nor can they remove the cause of the struggle. They can only assist the master class by administering to the workers periodical doses of dope, and holding in readiness the forces necessary to quell restiveness when dope proves ineffectual. In a word, they have proved themselves fit to govern.

The more effective a government is, as a government, the more certainly it becomes unpopular. Periodical changes are, therefore, inevitable, and the rapid rise of the Labour Party to the favour of the masters and the support of the workers may speedily change into an equally rapid descent; but the class struggle will go on. No mere change of government, whether constitutional or dictatorial, can stop it. It can

only introduce an alternative method of attempting to suppress the symptoms.

Nothing short of the conversion of the means of living into common property can remove the antagonism of interests between masters and slaves. That is the object of the Socialist Party, which it alone has consistently adhered to. It alone, therefore, expresses the interests of the working class, and all workers of both sexes, plain or coloured, employed or unemployed, are invited to join.

E. B.

ANSWER TO A CORRESPONDENT. ARE THERE SOCIALISTS IN PARLIAMENT?

A correspondent tells us that our reply last month to a question concerning the £150 election deposit gave the impression that there are Socialist M.P.'s already in Parliament. The reply was not ambiguous, and we think that no reader would have been left in any doubt provided that he read the whole of the reply. However, for the benefit of any readers who failed to understand that the reference was to Socialist M.P.'s who will be elected at some future date, we make the following statement. There are not now, and have not been at any time, in the Parliament of this country any M.P.'s elected as Socialists on a Socialist programme. Some M.P.'s have on occasion described themselves as Socialists, but in every instance these individuals, whatever their party, have owed their election to non-Socialist votes deliberately solicited and received on a programme of capitalist reforms. This applies equally to the Labour Party, the I.L.P., the Social Democratic Party, and the Communist Party.

We hope we have now made our meaning clear to our correspondent.

* * *

Several letters have been crowded out owing to pressure on space. They will be dealt with in our next issue.

ED. COMM.

THE SOCIALIST PARTY OF AUSTRALIA.

Readers in Australia are invited to communicate with the Socialist Party of Australia at Box 1440, P.O., Elizabeth St., Melbourne.

THE RISE AND FALL OF THE COMMUNIST PARTY.

From information that has been published from time to time about the number of its members, it is possible to judge of the varying fortunes of the Communist Party of Great Britain. Of late those variations have been consistently downwards.

A Communist Party member, writing to the *New York Militant* (March 15th, 1931), a "Trotskyite" organ, states that the Communist Party began with 5,000 members. Statements made at the time put the membership higher, but it has not been possible to obtain authoritative information to that effect.

In March, 1921 (see *Communist*, April 2nd, 1921), 5,000 members of the I.L.P. were reported to have joined the Communist Party *en bloc*. The Editor of the *Communist* remarked that this was the virtual end of the I.L.P., which henceforth "can have no share or part in the Revolution." Within a year or two the Communists were pushing the "United Front" campaign and asking the I.L.P. to join hands with them, not, indeed, to further the "Revolution," but to secure the election of MacDonald, Thomas, Henderson, and the rest of the Labour Party leaders.

International Press Correspondence (August 12th, 1924), an official Communist publication, gave the 1923 membership as 5,116, and the 1924 membership as 3,000.

The Report of the Central Committee to the 1927 Conference of the British Party (see *Manchester Guardian*, September 29th, 1927) gave the membership for 1925, 1926, and 1927 as 5,000, 10,800 and 7,377. Of the 7,377 members, 2,300 were in South Wales, 1,500 in Scotland, 1,321 in London, 737 on Tyneside, 534 in Manchester, and 420 in Sheffield.

With regard to the 1926 membership, it was stated at the Moscow Congress in July, 1930, by Manuilsky, that the highest point reached in 1926 was 12,000 (see *Daily Herald*, July 8th, 1930). The figure 12,000 probably relates to a later date in 1926 than the figure 10,800 given in the preceding paragraph.

Pravda (October 25th, 1930), the Russian Communist paper, gave the membership for the middle of 1928 as 9,000, and for February, 1930, as 3,200 (see *Observer*, October 26th, 1930). It also disclosed that, out of a total membership of four

millions in the Communist International, only 500,000 were outside Russia.

At the Bermondsey Communist Party Conference in January, 1929, a delegate, Miss Budden, said that the membership was then 3,700 (*Daily Telegraph*, January 21st, 1929).

Manuilsky (see above) gave the membership in July, 1930, as 3,500 (*Daily Herald*, July 8th, 1930).

The Tyneside District Committee of the Communist Party questioned the accuracy of the official figures and gave the membership at the middle of 1929 as not more than 2,500, possibly less (see *Communist Review*, October, 1929).

Finally, the Communist Party member who supplied information to the New York *Militant* states that the present membership is under 1,000. He states also that the circulation of the *Daily Worker* has dropped from 10,000 a day to less than 5,000; as compared with a circulation of 70,000 for the former *Workers' Weekly*, and a circulation, at its highest point, of 110,000 for the *Sunday Worker*.

The following table sets out the estimates for the various years. The figure for 1921 is made up by adding the 5,000 I.L.P. recruits to the previous 5,000 members.

Year.	Membership.
1920	5,000
1921	10,000
1923	5,116
1924	3,000
1925	5,000
1926	10,800
"	12,000
1927	7,377
1928	9,000
1929	3,700
"	2,500
1930	3,200
"	3,500
1931	1,000

The Communists' chief criticism of the S.P.G.B. has been that our method, with its insistence upon educating the workers in Socialist principles, is too slow. What do the Communists now think of their own "quick" methods? We wonder if the Russian Government and the Russian workers are satisfied with value received for the money—which must run into hundreds of thousands of pounds—spent here on propaganda, little of it having anything to do with Communism?

H.

A Socialist Searchlight.

CAN A CATHOLIC BE A SOCIALIST?

Pope Pius XI, addressing a gathering of "pilgrims" on Friday, May 15th, declared that "no good Catholic can be a good Socialist." This is, of course, the familiar and natural view of the Catholic Church, and one with which the *Socialist* fully agrees.

The Pope's words were reported in all of the London daily papers on May 16th, with one exception—the *Daily Herald*. The reason for this deliberate omission of a piece of news is obvious. The Labour Party has a large number of Catholic supporters whom it does not wish to offend, but at the same time it does not wish to make a formal declaration of opposition to Socialism. The *Herald's* line, therefore, is to pretend that Socialism and Catholicism are not incompatible. On a previous occasion when the Socialist Party's attitude on the question had been misrepresented by the Editor of the *Herald*, he declined to allow us to state our position in his columns. The *Herald* under its new Editor and new proprietors evidently follows the same policy of avoiding discussion.

But although the *Herald* did not publish the Pope's statement at the time when it was made, they published some comments on it. On May 22nd their Rome correspondent sent a reassuring message, in which he quoted the Pope's Under-Secretary for Extraordinary Ecclesiastical Affairs as saying that the Pope quite understood the position of the British Labour Party and had no intention of attacking them. The Under-Secretary said:—

For instance, we know there are bishops and many Catholics in England who belong to the Labour Party.

This fact may be easily explained by the special situation of the Labour Party, many points of whose programme coincide with those of Catholic Syndicates, and which also admits in the political field class collaboration, as is proved by the present Government.

In other words, the Catholic Church is not opposed to the Labour Party because that party is not a Socialist party. This point of view received confirmation from Sir James Sexton, a Labour M.P. who is also a Catholic. He explained (*Daily*

Telegraph, May 18th) that the Labour Party's aim is not Socialism, but "what I might call the nationalisation of essential commodities, such as water, gas, the railways, mines, and so on."

It is because Socialists do not want nationalisation or state capitalism that they do not support the Labour Party. For the same reason, Catholics who are opposed to Socialism can, and do, join the Labour Party. Readers who are interested in the whole question should read our pamphlet, "Socialism and Religion."

* * *

THE BANK RATE AND THE WORKERS.

On September 26th, 1929, the bank rate was raised from 5½ to 6½ per cent. This meant that the industrial capitalists who had to borrow money from the banks would have to pay a higher rate of interest, and it was only to be expected that they should howl with rage. By pretending that the question was one that concerned the workers, they were able to get many influential members of the Labour Party and the I.L.P. to join the chorus of protest. Maxton and Tillett were two of the decoy ducks; and the late Lord Melchett was particularly vociferous among the employers. The protest was based on the claim that a high bank rate would mean more unemployment and less money for wages. If the theory were a sound one from a working-class standpoint, a fall in the bank rate ought to cause a reduction in unemployment and an increase in wages. It has not caused either.

The bank rate was reduced on May 1st, 1930, to 3 per cent., and on May 1st, 1931, to 2½ per cent., but unemployment, instead of going down during 1930 and the early part of 1931, mounted up to 2½ millions—upwards of a million more than it was when the bank rate was at 5½ or 6½. The same period has witnessed a rapidly growing volume of wage reductions. One case is of special interest. The late Lord Melchett was chairman, and his son (the present Lord Melchett) a director, of Amalgamated Anthracite Collieries, Ltd. This company, helped, no doubt, by the fall in the bank rate, increased its profit from £289,000 in 1929 to £443,000 in 1930. Did it then increase the wages of the miners it employs? On the contrary, it reduced their pay, in keeping with the lowered pay of

South Wales miners generally. What have Messrs. Maxton and Tillett to say to that?

Another point of interest is that the present 2½ per cent. rate is the lowest since 1909. Was unemployment low in 1909, and were the workers well off? On the contrary, the rate of unemployment in 1909 was 7.7 per cent., which (except for 1908, when the unemployment rate was 7.8 per cent.) was the highest rate of unemployment since 1886, and was higher than in any succeeding year until 1921. It was also about this time that Mr. Lloyd George endorsed the statement that about a third of the population were in a state of perpetual poverty.

The bank rate is a question which matters a great deal to the industrial and financial capitalists in their mutual relations, but one which matters nothing to the workers, who are exploited by one section of the capitalists no more and no less than by other sections.

* * *

THE POT CALLS THE KETTLE BLACK.

The Labour Party's Secret Funds.

For years the Labour Party has denounced the Liberals and Tories for having secret funds and for soliciting donations from wealthy men. As soon as the Mosley Party was launched, some of the Labour Party ministers used this line of attack against Sir Oswald Mosley. Mr. Tom Johnston, Lord Privy Seal, said that the Mosley Party had spent from £30,000 to £40,000 on a poster display, and that the money came from secret sources. But while Johnston is only a recent recruit to the inner circle of the Labour Party, and possibly did not know very much about its affairs, Mosley is an old hand, and promptly replied with a similar attack on the Labour Party. Speaking in the Drill Hall, Ashton, on Monday, April 27th, he said (*Manchester Guardian*, April 28th):—

Now I am going to say something about the cant and humbug talked by the Labour party. They say I refuse to publish a list of my individual subscribers. I do, and the Labour party also refuses to publish their list. I refuse because if I published it subscribers might be subject to intimidation.

Would you like to see the appeal sent to me and other rich men by the Labour party for their secret funds? It is sent out to rich men, and rich men alone. That private and secret fund is never published. I don't blame the

Labour party for it, but I do blame them for coming on the platform and pretending they get their funds only from the workers.

The Labour Party has not replied to Mosley on this point.

The political correspondent of the *Daily Mail* wrote as follows (April 29th, 1931):—

Socialist leaders are unwilling to reply to an allegation made by Sir Oswald Mosley in a speech at Ashton-under-Lyne that the party has a secret political fund which is replenished by subscriptions obtained from rich men, and details of which are never published.

Why should we advertise that man? was the only reply of one leader, when asked to confirm or deny the statement.

The late Mr. Bernhard Baron, the tobacco millionaire, was a regular and generous contributor to Socialist election funds. Wealthy and titled members of the party also make substantial gifts.

In the Lobby yesterday the absence of a reply to the direct charge was accepted as confirmation of a general suspicion that, like other parties, the Socialist party in office is not so hard up as it used to be when in opposition.

Of course, when the *Daily Mail* writes "Socialist" it means the Labour Party.

* * *

THE VALUE OF INSURANCE SHARES.

In the midst of the investors' complaints about the hard times they are going through, the *Economist* (May 2nd) publishes a list showing the current values of the shares of 25 insurance companies.

£1,000 invested in insurance company ordinary shares in 1913, after receiving high rates of dividend in the intervening period, would now, if sold, fetch, on the average, £3,207, i.e., more than three times the original sum invested. One thousand pounds invested in the General Accident Insurance Co. would now fetch £8,000! In the company whose shares have risen least of all, the original investor could sell out and receive more than 30s. for every £1 invested in 1913.

* * *

RELIGION IS THE OPIUM OF THE PEOPLE.

Did Kingsley Forestall Marx?

A writer in the *Freethinker* (March 22nd, 1931) claims that the Reverend Charles Kingsley, Canon of Westminster, preceded Marx in describing religion as the opium of the people. The writer in the *Freethinker* appears to be mistaken.

This is the passage in which Kingsley deals with the subject:—

We have used the Bible as if it were an opium dose for keeping beasts of burden patient while they were being overloaded—a mere book to keep the poor in order.

The above occurs in "Politics for the People," published in 1848.

Marx's famous phrase was published four or five years earlier. It was as follows:—

Religion is the sigh of the oppressed creature, the feelings of a heartless world, just as it is the spirit of unspiritual conditions. It is the opium of the people.

This passage is taken from an article entitled "Introduction to a Critique of the Hegelian Philosophy of Right," published in 1844 in the "Franco-German Year Book." The translation is by Eden and Cedar Paul, and is given on pages 57 and 58 of "Karl Marx," by Otto Ruhle (Allen & Unwin).

It will be noticed that the two writers, Marx and Kingsley, used the same telling comparison, but in rather different senses. Kingsley appears to be protesting against the use to which religion has been put; while Marx was accounting for the hold that religion has on the minds of the oppressed.

* * *

MISS JENNIE LEE ON THE USES OF TRADE UNIONS.

Miss Jennie Lee, M.P., at the I.L.P. Annual Conference at Scarborough on April 5th, spoke against a resolution which proposed that the I.L.P. should leave the Labour Party. The Labour Government, she said (*Times*, April 6th), "stood for Imperialism and capitalism, and rested on an amalgamation of Conservative and Liberal elements," and she was "sick and tired of being entangled in Liberalism and compromise" (*Manchester Guardian*, April 6th). Yet, in face of that, she thought that the I.L.P. ought to keep in with the party of Imperialism and capitalism and go on making her sick and tired, because "at present the Labour movement had strong Trade Union backing, and they (the I.L.P.) had not" (*Manchester Guardian*, April 6th).

It is, of course, very noble of Miss Lee to go on sacrificing her feelings in this way, but it is not entirely irrelevant to point out that Miss Lee is very much dependent in her constituency on the support of the Miners' Federation. If she were to oppose the capitalist programme of the Labour

Party and lose its support and that of the Miners' Federation, she would have to say good-bye to her Parliamentary seat and her present prospects of a political career. But it is no new thing for Miss Lee to oppose Socialism for the sake of cadging votes and support. She had chosen that path when first she set eyes on Westminster. When she was elected at North Lanark in March, 1929, her election address contained no reference whatever, direct or indirect, to Socialism. It even contained no mention that she was the nominee of the I.L.P. She fought as official Labour Party candidate and gave prominence to the fact that she accepted the programme of the Miners' Federation of Great Britain, thus committing herself, incidentally, to the queer doctrine that while the royalty-owning capitalist is an exploiter, his brother capitalist who invests in mining shares is not! She backed all of the silly—and in some cases harmful—reforms of the Labour Party, and it was admitted by one of her prominent supporters that there was little to choose between her programme and that of her Liberal opponent. Mr. P. J. Dollan, of the I.L.P. National Administrative Council, writing up the election campaign in the *New Leader* on March 15th, 1929, said of the Liberal candidate (also a woman), "She is advocating a Radical programme which would have horrified the late Lord Oxford because of its similarity to most of the Labour reforms now commonly advocated."

What, in fact, won Miss Lee the election was the backing of the Miners' Federation. Hence Miss Lee's determination to "sacrifice" herself by staying in the Labour Party, with the Trade Union votes and Trade Union funds, rather than oppose the party of "Imperialism and capitalism" and lose her seat in Parliament.

The delegates at the I.L.P. Conference overwhelmingly endorsed the official policy, urged by all sections of their National Administrative Council, of staying in the Labour Party. The motion to disaffiliate was rejected by 173 to 37 (see *News-Chronicle*, April 6th).

* * *

THE OVER-POPULATION MYTH.

Professor T. E. Gregory gave an address at Manchester University on February 2nd, 1931, on the subject of population and production. The following extracts are from

a report published on February 3rd by the *Manchester Guardian*:—

He pointed out that up to the war we had all been largely influenced by the teaching of Malthus, and had feared that our era of prosperity could not last if the population continued to increase. In 1920, after the war, this pessimism had greatly increased. "I confess," he said, "I was a pessimist of that kind myself. Indeed, we were all pessimists in those days, from Mr. Keynes to the editor of the *Manchester Guardian*."

But since 1920 there had been a curious alteration in theory and in the facts. Great importance as a social factor could be placed upon the birth control movement and its increasing recognition. Again we were clearly caught up in a phase of expanding production. Production was increasing more rapidly than the population of the world. Between 1913 and 1928 the world's population increased by about 10 per cent., the world's production of food-stuffs by 16 per cent., and the world's production of raw materials by no less than 40 per cent. Thirdly, there was every chance that the population of this and other European countries would become stationary and even decline. We were approaching the ideal postulated by John Stuart Mill—the ideal of a stationary state in which there would be no further increase in population.

The Editor of the *Manchester Guardian* made the belatedly wise comment that the "more production" campaign engineered after the War by the Government, the employers, and the Labour leaders, was apparently unnecessary.

We would draw particular attention to the fact that while all the economists and newspapers and politicians, including Professor Gregory, were flatly wrong on the question of over-population and the need for more production, the Socialist Party, correctly guided by its Marxian theories, ridiculed the Malthusian nonsense over 20 years ago and showed up at the time the true nature of the post-war campaign to get the workers to work harder.

Just to show that experience does not teach him anything, the Editor of the *Guardian* complacently dismisses capitalism's constant over-production in relation to the demands of the market as "growing pains"! H.

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The Socialist Standard,

JUNE,



1931

THE LABOUR PARTY'S BUDGET.**IS THE LAND TAX SOCIALISM?**

When the Countess of Iveagh, a Conservative M.P., told a meeting of her party, as reported in the *Southend Standard* on May 21st, that she could see behind the Budget, and particularly behind the proposed Land Tax, "the pure Socialistic principle that private ownership should cease," she was putting a point of view that finds expression alike in *The Times* and the *Daily Herald*. Have we not been assured for many years by the Labour Party leaders that their Budgets would be instruments for procuring bold social changes, and would, for that reason, be strikingly different from the unimaginative and orthodox financial measures of the Churchills and Lloyd Georges?

Is there, then, ground for the fears of the Countess? Are we about to witness a great frontal attack upon the existing social system? The Government professes to attach great importance to the Land Tax, and even one of their harshest critics, Sir Charles Trevelyan, who recently resigned his ministerial post as a protest against their inertia, is enthusiastic for this one measure. His enthusiasm is inspired by the example of Vienna, where a Land Tax has been used by the Municipality to

subsidise the building of working-class houses.

Nevertheless, these hopes and fears, so far as they relate to the wage earners, are groundless. The Land Tax is capitalist in origin and in effect, and has nothing whatever to do with Socialism. Sir Charles Trevelyan, forced to admit that it was a Liberal proposal, brought forward by Mr. Lloyd George 25 years ago, lamely seeks to gloss it over by describing the pre-war Liberals who were pushing the proposal as "Socialist-Liberals"—whatever that may mean (*New Leader*, May 15th). He could have chosen no better example than Vienna to show the uselessness of the Land Tax to the workers. It is true that the Vienna Municipality taxed the land owners to build houses for workers at very low rents, but the effect of thus reducing the workers' cost of living has been to facilitate a reduction in their wages by a corresponding amount. The land owners have been taxed, not for the benefit of the workers, but of the employers. Here, as in Austria and elsewhere, in order to carry on the administration of capitalism, the Government needs revenue. Taxation, in the last resort, can be paid only by those who have property, and the controversies about the kind and amount of taxes are disputes between the sections of the propertied class as to which of them shall foot the bill. If this is a correct view of the situation, we would expect to find the Land Tax welcomed by certain sections of the capitalist class who stand to gain thereby; and, indeed, we find this to be the case. The following are comments from various capitalist newspapers, politicians, and business men.

The *Daily Mail* (April 29th), in its editorial, puts the Conservative point of view:—

The new duty on land values will be received with favour even in the Conservative party, subject, of course, to the terms of the measure when they are made known.

For some unexplained reason urban land has hitherto escaped its fair share of taxation in this country. The position is very different in the United States, where land values in the great cities have long been subjected to taxation for State and municipal purposes, and at a rate much higher than Mr. Snowden proposes. In Mr. Snowden's scheme agricultural land is to be exempted, so that the new duties will not affect farmers and small holders.

Such being the circumstances, it may be difficult for the Conservative leaders to prove that the proposed land tax is unreasonable, when it is regarded by the majority of voters as overdue.

There could be no worse point upon which to fight an election when the next dissolution comes. The new scheme should then not be condemned out of hand.

The *Daily Herald's* Lobby Correspondent confirmed this:—

Now the Conservatives realise that the taxes on urban land will be popular in most quarters, especially among business men, and that it would be bad ground to fight on.—(*Daily Herald*, April 30th.)

The *Daily Express's* Lobby Correspondent reported similarly:—

The Conservatives, acquiescing in the principle of Mr. Snowden's plan, will concentrate their attack on the details.—(*Daily Express*, May 4th.)

Sir John Corcoran, director of the National Union of Manufacturers, gave his opinion, and presumably the opinion of his Association, to the *Daily Herald* (April 28th):—

If Mr. Snowden can levy the land tax without too much cost and in such a way that it will not have the effect of withholding development, the scheme may be practicable.

Lord Melchett, director of coal, oil, and chemical concerns, also gave qualified approval (*Daily Herald*, April 28th).

What is true of the Land Tax is true of the Budget as a whole. It embodies no principle of any significance whatever to the workers. It makes no inroads into the power of the capitalists, and is, in fact, hardly distinguishable from former Tory Budgets. Mr. Churchill, the last Conservative Chancellor of the Exchequer, put the point neatly in the debate in the House of Commons on April 29th:—

I shall deal with the general question of the Budget, and the House will naturally not be astonished if I say that I listened to the Budget speech with amusement, which almost rose into hilarity. (Laughter.) I could hardly believe my ears as I heard the Chancellor of the Exchequer unfold a long series of proposals which were virtually an acceptance in fact and in form of the financial measures and expedients which I devised and practised, and which he derided and condemned. (Laughter.) As one by one those familiar shades arose from that side of the table, and as I recall to memory all the criticisms and scathing censures he had lavished upon each of them, I wondered whether I had not perhaps left behind some of my old Budget notes and that one of his able secretaries had, by mistake, put them into the Chancellors' famous red box.—(*Times*, April 30th.)

The I.L.P. is, as usual, divided in its attitude, but will, of course, go to the aid of the Government if there is danger of a defeat, no matter what the Government does and no matter what opinion the I.L.P. may decide to express about the merits of

the Government's measures. While Sir Charles Trevelyan supports the Land Tax, another I.L.P. Member of Parliament, described as a "leading member of the I.L.P. Group," is quoted by the *New Leader* (May 1st) as saying of the Budget:

Until Land Values were mentioned, it was a Tory statement. Then it became Liberal. Of Socialism, not a comma! In other words, it is to be Toryism this year, Liberalism in two years' time, and Socialism in the year X.

Meanwhile, Mr. Brailsford, also of the I.L.P., writing in the *New Leader* on May 15th, laments the Land Tax because it will encourage the use of land for commercial purposes and so disfigure the landscape. In the past, other members of the I.L.P. have advocated the Land Tax precisely for the purpose of promoting commercial development.

On the subject of the social reforms promised by the Labour Party, it is interesting to have Mr. Snowden's admission that his views coincide with those of Gladstone—this from the party that regards Marx as out-of-date!

I have always agreed with Mr. Gladstone's rule that in times of industrial depression it is better to use our resources to stimulate trade than to make undue sacrifices. It is in times of prosperity that we can afford to lessen the intolerable burden of debt and to liberate resources for schemes of economic and social reform.—(*Daily Herald*, April 28th.)

Any workers who are disappointed with the Labour Party's Budget may derive some comfort from the announcement by the City Editor of the *Daily Express* (April 28th) that—

The Budget was favourably received in the City.

We can now point out to the Countess of Iveagh that behind the Land Tax proposals and the Budget generally we see, not Socialist theory, but a motley band of Liberal, Labour, and Conservative newspapers, politicians and business men, differing among themselves only on the question of the best method of administering the capitalist system.

NOTICE TO READERS.**DISPLAY OF POSTERS.**

In order to increase our circulation we would like to hear from readers who are willing to display our poster in a suitable position and to sell the "Socialist Standard." Address communications to the Literature Secretary, 42 Great Dover Street, S.E.1.

INDIA TO-DAY.

(Continued from May Issue.)

"India is now one of the eight most important industrial areas in the world" (Simon Report, page 23).

India's industrial importance is the basis of the present strife there. The conditions of the workers in the industrial centres are admitted by all to be terrible, but endeavours are being made, with some success, to direct their discontent into a channel that will not interfere with the continued accumulation of the huge profits that are being made out of their industry. The Nationalists and the Imperialists each seek the support of the Indian worker for their particular brands of exploitation.

Connection with Western culture and Western markets has gradually taught the more fortunate of India's millions the essentials of capitalist enterprise. Native Indian capitalists have acquired large fortunes and have gradually taken a more and more important part in the exploitation of India's resources and of their fellow-countrymen, and they now thirst for unshackled political dominion.

India is predominantly an agricultural country, but its size and population are so huge that the industrial portion, though only just over 10 per cent. of the whole, has an important effect on world industrial relations. The total population is 319 millions, of which 32½ millions belong to the towns.

Bombay and Calcutta, each with a population of over a million, are at present the two principal industrial centres, but other towns are rapidly rising to challenge them in industrial importance.

Bombay is the greatest centre of cotton spinning and weaving in Asia, and the trade and industry of the city are now predominantly Indian. In fact, the pioneers of the textile manufacturing industry were Indians and the first mill was set up by an Indian. The textile industry was originally built up on yarn of low grade, as Lancashire monopolised the trade in higher quality cloths. China and the Far East had supplied India's market. Of recent years the Japanese have gradually captured this trade, mainly by means of the cheap products of their Chinese mills. The Bombay mills, therefore, turned over to the manufacture of cloth. In the new trade, factories also arose in the interior of India,

at Ahmedabad, Sholapur, and Nagpur. These new factories offer serious competition to Bombay and tend to expand at its expense. As one writer puts it: "These conditions explain why Bombay, struggling for its life, is the centre of the industrial politics of India." It may be added that India is the largest single import market in the world for cotton textiles. Owing to the native and Japanese grip on the India market, the lifting of the boycott will not go far to restore Lancashire's lost trade.

Calcutta, in Bengal, is the centre of the jute industry. The Bengal production of jute is so great that India holds the virtual monopoly of this trade. Originally the trade was in the hands of Europeans, but most of the share capital of the jute mills is now in native hands. This is also true of the tea gardens of Assam and elsewhere, which were first established and developed by the British. They are now carried on side by side with many that are Indian-owned. In fact, all over India, commercial enterprise is falling more and more into Indian hands.

The iron and steel industry offers yet another important example of native progress. The native-owned Tata Iron and Steel Company, founded by J. N. Tata (a Bombay Parsee who made a fortune in the cotton mills of Bombay and Nagpur), built a steel city in the jungles of Northern India near the coalfields of Bengal and the port of Calcutta. The works produced at full pressure during the war, supplying the essential needs of India and the armies which fought in Egypt, East Africa, and Mesopotamia. Its products are exported to Pacific markets as far east as Japan. British and native steel now divide the home market, but native steel is steadily gaining.

From the above it will be seen that industrial progress is pushing forward rapidly in India and that its principal requirements are being met more and more by the products of native industry. This being so, the native manufacturers are offering greater opposition to the competition of foreign concerns, and more particularly the British competitor who seeks to use his political ascendancy to further his economic interests. Where the natives secure a tariff against the foreign importer, the British firms demand and obtain preferential treatment.

The Indian demand for dominion status or independence rests on the economic

interests of the native capitalists. The basis of the British opposition has been briefly put by the *Manchester Guardian* as follows:—

There are two chief reasons why a self-regarding England may hesitate to relax her control over India. The first is that her influence in the East depends partly upon her power to summon troops and to draw resources from India in time of need. This power will vanish when India has Dominion status. The second is that Great Britain finds in India her best market, and that she has a thousand millions of capital invested there.—(December 30th, 1929.)

It will be noticed that the grounds for and against Indian independence have no connection whatever with the general well-being of India's millions, yet the protagonists on each side pour forth idealistic phrases by the shoal to induce the belief that the special interest of each is a movement for "spiritual and moral" uplifting. The furtherance of capitalist exploitation has always been bolstered up with similar nebulous nonsense.

There are a multitude of economic interests involved in India, some of which cut across each other. We can only mention a few of them to illustrate the complexity of Indian affairs.

The most important element is the native Indian manufacturer, faced by severe competition of the highly organised Eastern and Western industries, who demands protection. He sees Indian products being shipped abroad, to return manufactured and sold in competition with his own goods.

Many native merchants have amassed considerable wealth and have built up extensive selling organisations in India. For long they have been dependent upon the agents of British firms. They now want freedom to make direct foreign connections and cut out the cost of and dependence upon the middlemen.

Foreign firms, on the other hand (particularly Japanese and American), are establishing their own selling organisations in India and endeavouring to cut out the native merchant altogether. This, together with foreign competition and the development of hand weaving in the villages, supplied the enthusiasm for the boycott of foreign goods, and the sudden cult for village-made cloth, etc.

The educated Indians (the "intellectuals"), who have shared professorships, judgeships, etc., want to keep their lucrative connections. On the other hand, they

see a tendency to open these professions to a larger group of people than formerly. Educated Indians (whose education has been obtained at considerable cost) find their number accumulating at a far greater rate than the openings for employment. Consequently, as a mass, they are changeable. Those who have security in the Government service want a continuance of the British occupation; those who cannot get a job, favour the other side; those who are in and out, divide their support accordingly. The recent constitutional reforms give more scope to this group and promise opportunities of a political career. On the other hand, some see in Indian self-government still greater opportunities for employment and advancement. This explains why they are probably the most vocal and most fickle element in Indian politics.

There is a large body of natives that act as agents for importing firms. Where there is little danger of the business being taken out of their hands by direct representatives, they favour a continuance of the old régime.

There are also, of course, the wealthy Indian Princes, who still draw enormous revenues from India and are dependent upon the British occupation for a continuance of their lazy and luxurious modes of living.

Another considerable element in the situation is the conflicting interests of British merchants themselves. The following quotation from No. 11 of "Studies in World Economy," issued by the Carnegie Endowment, will make the position clear:

The large British trading companies in India typically are influenced less by sentiments of nationality than by commercial considerations. Many of them claim to be, and are, strictly international in their trade policy and outlook. It is for this reason that considerations of profit rather than of nationality determine their actions. British officials have frequently called attention to the fact that American manufacturers often have been able to use British houses of established influence to promote the trade of American manufacturers because the American exporter was able to enlist the service of the British house by offering larger commissions, by sending auxiliary salesmen and technical experts, and, in general, by providing greater opportunity for profit than was furnished by manufacturing exporters in the United Kingdom. (Page 149.)

Over 70 per cent. of the Indian population draw their sustenance from the soil. The peasant problem, therefore, has a considerable influence in some directions on the course of affairs. The demands of the peasants for manufactures are few, but

there are so many millions of peasants that the aggregate of these demands amounts to a considerable proportion of India's total needs. The vast majority of the peasants live in debt to the moneylender. Their household requirements are supplied by a shop or two in the village, whose owners frequently provide the first market for village produce and add to their earnings by moneylending. Rises in prices immediately affect their demand for goods owing to the fact that the "standard of living is at the very margin of subsistence" (page 158, "Studies in World Economy"). Their small holdings do not provide them with occupation for more than half their time, and consequently they provide the manufacturing districts with a floating supply of labour.

The peasants want their small supplies of manufactured goods at the lowest prices (the foreign product, as a rule), and they want to be free to sell their produce without the restriction of export duties. In these ways their interests are opposed to Nationalism. On the other hand, they urgently want a reduction in taxation (particularly the removal of the salt tax), and the Nationalist movement for village-made cloth has enabled numbers of them to use their unoccupied time and supplement their meagre earnings by weaving. How little the peasant is really stirred by Nationalist aspirations may be gathered from the following remarks of Lajput Rai, a leading Indian Nationalist:—

The desire for political independence, the sense of shame and humiliation born of being a subject race, of being a political pariah, must, from the nature of things, be confined largely to the educated middle class. Even the mass could not be expected to take a very deep interest in the movement for political independence. Their ignorance, their illiteracy, but most of all the hard struggle they have to carry on for barest existence, prevents them from devoting time or thought to the question. Their time and thought are given to the fight against hunger and want, against disease and distress, against misery and wretchedness. They are easy to please. A slight act of kindness or of charity or of consideration makes them happy. They are easily confused on fundamental issues. (*Young India*, page 31.)

The group we have now to consider is the spectre that haunts the deliberations and celebrations of both Nationalists and Imperialists—the Indian working class. The Indian working class has arisen so recently and is still so much influenced by village associations, that clearness of out-

look cannot be expected from it yet. The conditions under which the workers live and work resemble England in the middle of last century. Housing conditions are abominable; 70 per cent. of the tenements of Bombay are classified as single rooms. Their relations with their employers, both native and foreign, have been marked by disastrous strikes. The employers in their unrestricted desire to extract the utmost from the workers have made determined efforts to smash the unions, and there have been bitter conflicts in the Bombay mills, the Tata Iron Works, on the railways, and elsewhere. As the smashing of the workers' organisations for defence involved too much, an effort is being made to convert them into harmless associations which will eternally bargain (and lose) with the employers—hence the attempt to introduce the Whitley idea into India.

The native Bombay employers have made huge fortunes out of their native workers, and they do not want Indian Nationalism to interfere with the continued exploitation of the Indian worker. Their fellow native employers in other industries are at one with them on this point, and their henchmen, the educated professional men, etc. (Lajput Rai's "Middle Class"), are seeing to it that capitalist interests are protected in their programmes for independence. The most advanced of the Nationalist programmes, where it refers to the workers, only aims at bringing Indian industrialism into line with modern methods adopted in the more advanced capitalist countries.

Limitations of space compel us to curtail our further remarks, but before concluding we will quote from an illuminating reply of Gandhi's to a reception given him by the Trade Union of Ahmedabad. From this it will be seen that Gandhi's sentimental outbursts are not born of particular interest in the Indian worker:—

Your work is making you known throughout the world. The members of your Union are jealous of their rights and are prepared to lay down their lives for them, but their leaders, who guide them, have no ill-will against the capitalists. In their welfare and their power you see your own welfare and power. That is the secret of your strength. Outside people cannot understand your position. They have thought of capitalists and working men as exploiters and exploited. All capitalists, according to some, are born ogres. But there need be no such inherent antipathy between the two. It is an erroneous notion. If the capitalists are apt to be proud of their wealth, the working men are apt to be proud of their numerical strength. We

are liable to be swayed and intoxicated by the same passions as the capitalists, and it must be our prayer that both may be free from that passion. I feel that no class war poisons the relations between the millowners and the working men in Ahmedabad. I hope and pray that the present cordial relations may be maintained between them.

But I do not want to deceive you. I must warn you that I do not bear any ill to the capitalists. I can think of doing them no harm. But I want, by means of suffering, to awaken them to their sense of duty, I want to melt their hearts and get them to render justice to their less fortunate brethren. They are human beings, and my appeal to them will not go in vain. The history of Japan reveals many an instance of self-sacrificing capitalists. — (*The Indian Labour Review*, April, 1931, p. 19.)

No wonder Bombay mill owners gave dinners to Gandhi!

The foregoing brief review of the position will give some idea of the welter of conflicting interests in India, but, apart from the peasants and workers, they are in agreement on one basic fact—that the Indian worker shall be exploited. The point of contention that is the centre of the turmoil is—Who shall be the exploiter?

To the Indian worker it matters not a jot whether he is exploited by Hindu, Moslem, or foreign capitalists. The Irish have secured a measure of independence, but the Irish worker is exploited just as of yore—only the exploitation has been more intensified. And so would it be with the Indian worker. The interests of the workers all over the world are identical, and opposed to the interests of the capitalists, national and international. When the Indian workers have learned this lesson, they will cease to be led into the blind alleys of Nationalist movements and will concentrate their attention upon the throwing off of capitalist domination, native and foreign. GILMAC.

Correction.—In the first part of the above article, published in the May issue, the author of the "Industrial Evolution of India" was printed Endgil. This should have been Gadgil.

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WHY SOCIALISM IS INEVITABLE.

THE MARXIAN VIEW.

When the Socialist declares that the process of capitalist development makes Socialism inevitable, he does not mean that the present system evolves into Socialism without the conscious effort of the workers.

M. Tugan Baronowsky remarks in his book on "Modern Socialism":—

"If the economic development itself naturally and really leads Socialism to victory without any conscious assistance of man, why then should the labouring class take part in a struggle and expend their forces to attain an end which, at any rate, must come about without submitting itself to any interference whatever from outside?"

The fact is, however, that present-day society does not develop "naturally and really" to Socialism, any more than the economic development of feudal society led "naturally and really" to capitalism. But, then, Marx never suggested that it would. The struggle between the capitalists and the feudal State was extended over generations, and the workers likewise will have to struggle with the capitalists for the possession of the means of life.

Let there be no mistake. On the industrial side the capitalist system can evolve into all manner of forms—into combines, cartels, joint stock companies, and into municipalisation and nationalisation, and public utility companies, but it certainly does not develop into Socialism. The basis of capitalism is the private ownership of the means of life. Socialism is the common ownership of the means of life. Not by any stretch of imagination can we see capitalism evolving "naturally and really" into a Socialist society. The only force that can bring the transformation is a majority of Socialists.

But the Socialist claims that the capitalist class is a parasite class and the capitalist system an unnecessary system. Capitalism has developed the productive powers of society into such gigantic organisations that these social forces of production must come under the control of society. The economic conditions are ripe for Socialism. The business in hand is to make enough Socialists. We say that Socialism is inevitable because Socialism is the only solution to the present-day problems of the majority. Every age has produced its own social problems, but

it has also produced the solution to them. That solution may be ridiculed or ignored for a time, but in that case the problems remain unsolved. They remain unsolved now because they can only be solved in one way, that is, by Socialism. What are the problems of capitalism? The poverty of the workers amidst a superabundance of wealth, extensive unemployment and the waste of the productive forces. Unemployment and "over-production" are the inevitable outcome of capitalism. The markets at home and abroad are always choked with surplus produce because the workers' consumption of the wealth they produce is limited to the amount of their wages, supplemented by State charity, and a great amount of wealth is left in the hands of the master class, which they are unable to dissipate, despite the wildest extravagance. The competition for markets forces ever cheaper methods of production to be devised, chiefly by labour-saving machinery. More and more wealth is produced with less and less labour. Hence, over-production and unemployment.

In capitalist society production is limited to the needs of markets, not used to satisfy the needs of the workers. As the extension of production is much above the extension of markets, the number of unemployed tends always to grow larger.

Production is fettered because the workers are not allowed to consume the wealth they produce, and they are not able to consume it because they have not produced it for themselves, but for the owners of the means of life. It is not necessary to stress the point any further. The process of machine development makes every reform abortive. Economic forces are ruthless; they do not compromise with Labour Cabinet Ministers.

It must be admitted that the workers, so far, would sooner try any plausible scheme offered by the capitalist politicians in the way of reform, than consider the case for Socialism. But we are not discouraged.

We say that Socialism is inevitable because, sooner or later, the workers will learn through bitter experience the futility of reforms and will be in that mood when the Socialist idea will interest them. The workers must first have knowledge, for a revolutionary movement can only be strong in the sense that the members are conscious of the aims and objects of its activity.

KAYE.

POLITICAL AND ECONOMIC ORGANISATION.

Some Common Objections Answered.

THE BATTLEFIELD OF THE STRUGGLE.

In a previous issue we outlined the policy of the Socialist Party of Great Britain. We showed that the class struggle arises on the economic field, but that the workers can only be victorious in that struggle by becoming conscious of their class interests and controlling political power. The objection is often raised that the worker is "robbed" in the process of production, and that it is on the industrial field that he must fight for emancipation. These objectors do not realise the truth pointed out by Marx, that economic systems are controlled politically. Marx showed that material conditions give rise to political institutions by means of which ruling classes dominate the economic world. The materialist view of history shows that the material conditions of production, etc., make necessary political machinery to govern or control the economic life of society.

Every class struggling for control of the economic basis of society has to become politically supreme in order to maintain or obtain economic possession.

"ECONOMIC POWER."

We are often told that "economic power" is the key to the situation. The working class, however, have no economic power. The working class cannot live except by being employed by the masters. The instruments of production as well as the products belong to the employers, which leaves the workers in the position of constantly struggling for a job and wages in order to exist.

It has been claimed that because the workers are necessary to production, their "indispensability" is an economic power. But the workers can't live on their quality of being necessary to industry. And as soon as they enter into production, they do so on the employers' terms. If "economic power" depends upon possession, as in the employers' case, then it at once rules the workers out from "economic power." The employing class have to "back up" their economic possession by controlling the political machine.

IS PARLIAMENT A CAPITALIST MACHINE?

One objection to the use of Parliament is that it is a capitalist machine. Parliaments, however, grew up long before the modern capitalist era, and they evolved along with the changes in the conditions of production. The fact that Parliament was used to bolster up the landowners and monarchy did not prevent the rising merchant class wresting it from the hands of their opponents and using it to legalise and defend their interests. The age-long efforts to prevent the workers having a vote, and the huge funds and resources used to maintain a capitalist majority, show how important a machine Parliament is for the ruling class. It is the seat of power. It is the main machine of the modern State, through which the armed forces are raised, maintained, controlled and moved. Before the workers can do anything with the State machinery, they first of all must win possession of it. Lenin is accepted by many critics as an authority, and he admits the truth of our position when he tells us, in his "State and Revolution," that the workers must make use of the present State.

LESSONS FROM OUR MASTERS.

Our critics themselves point to the efforts to try to keep a revolutionary out of Parliament. Does that not show that Parliament is an important machine with tremendous power? Why, otherwise, should they try to keep a revolutionary out? All the talk about the employing class abolishing Parliament if the workers became Socialists in large numbers indicates how anxious the ruling class are to prevent such a powerful weapon falling into workers' hands.

In no modern capitalist country have the ruling class been able to abolish Parliament. Countries that are backward and where the population have not yet developed a modern outlook are the only examples where attempts have been made with any success. The general tendency is in the other direction, that is, to widen the suffrage and to promote Parliamentary constitutions.

LIGHT FROM INDIA AND RUSSIA.

The merchant class of India to-day want their own Parliament, as that will establish their political supremacy and give them real control over their wealth and industry. The modern struggle in India is an example proving that possession of wealth alone is

not the real power, but that it is necessary for the owners to protect and maintain their possession by political and legal domination. Rival owners of wealth, national or foreign, enter the contest for political power because Parliamentary control is essential to run society their way.

In the backward Empire of Russia the Czar was driven to adopt a constitution and establish a Parliament (Duma), but finding it filled by many opponents, he thought the safe thing was to abolish it. He abolished it three times at least. But the ensuing disorder and chaos ended in the rout of the Czar and his oligarchy. The Constitution was too late. Even in those carefully devised Parliaments of Russia we found Bolshevik parties and Terrorist organisations representing workers and peasants.

THE DILEMMA OF DIRECT ACTION.

What is the alternative to the use of Parliament in modern constitutional countries? Political organisation is essential both to carry on the propaganda of Socialism as well as to win power. The only suggestion of those who criticise Parliament is that direct economic action offers a better way. The political machine, however, is the instrument controlling the armed forces, and if that Parliamentary control is left in the hands of our enemies, the workers are without any means of taking possession of the machinery of wealth production, etc.

Even regarded as a means of education, political action is superior to economic. On the political field the class struggle can be explained and driven home far more effectively than in the workshop, where the trade or industrial rivalry between workers obscures the class line.

LENIN ON THE ECONOMIC FIELD.

Lenin waged war for many years against the large Russian body known as "Economists," who stood for economic action against political organisation.

In a recent *Labour Monthly* was reproduced an article, written by Lenin, on "The Working Class as Champions of Democracy." Lenin refers to the "fundamental fallacies of all economists, namely, that it is possible to develop the political consciousness of the workers from within, so to say, out of the economic struggle, that is, starting solely or chiefly from this struggle."

Lenin answers the fallacy thus: "Political class-consciousness can be imparted

only from outside, that is, outside the economic struggle, outside the sphere of the relation of the workers to employers" (italics Lenin's).

We hold that Lenin has carried his point too far and that there is a large field for education within the daily economic struggle, but Lenin's insistence upon the political as the chief field of Socialist education is correct and has been proved up to the hilt by all past experience. Practically all those direct action agitators who talk about Socialism gained their ideas about the nature of Socialism outside the field of industry and in political agitation.

Some of the other objections to our position will be dealt with in a further article.

A. KOHN.

S.P.G.B. PROPAGANDA MEETINGS

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- Sunday** ... Tottenham, West Green Corner, 11.30 a.m.
Victoria Park, 11.30 a.m. and 4 p.m.
Walworth, Liverpool Street, 11.30 a.m.
Finsbury Park, 4 p.m.
Clapham Common, 6 p.m.
Cock Hotel, East Ham, 7.30 p.m.
Prince of Wales, Harrow Road, 11.30 a.m.
and 7.30 p.m.
- Monday** ... Ridley Road, Dalston, E.8., 8 p.m.
Forfar Road, Battersea, S.W., 8 p.m.
- Wednesday** ... The Fountain, Forest Gate Station, 8 p.m.
Prince of Wales, Paddington, 8 p.m.
Stepney Green, E., 8 p.m.
- Thursday** ... Tottenham Road, Dalston, E.8., 3 p.m.
Prince of Wales, Harrow Road, 8 p.m.
- Friday** ... Mossbury Road, Battersea, S.W., 8 p.m.
Prince of Wales, Paddington, 8 p.m.
- Saturday** ... Jolly Butchers Hill, Wood Green, 8 p.m.

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- Sunday** ... West Regent Street, 8 p.m.
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THE SOCIALIST PARTY OF GREAT BRITAIN.

OBJECT.—The establishment of a system of society based upon the common ownership and democratic control of the means and instruments for producing and distributing wealth by and in the interests of the whole community.

DECLARATION OF PRINCIPLES.

THE SOCIALIST PARTY of Great Britain HOLDS—

That society as at present constituted is based upon the ownership of the means of living (i.e., lands, factories, railways, etc.) by the capitalist or master class, and the consequent enslavement of the working class by whose labour alone wealth is produced.

That in society, therefore, there is an antagonism of interests, manifesting itself as a class struggle, between those who possess but do not produce and those who produce but do not possess.

That this antagonism can be abolished only by the emancipation of the working class from the domination of the master class, by the conversion into the common property of society of the means of production and distribution, and their democratic control by the whole people.

That as in the order of social evolution the working class is the last class to achieve its freedom, the emancipation of the working class will involve the emancipation of all mankind, without distinction of race or sex.

That this emancipation must be the work of the working class itself.

That as the machinery of government, including the armed forces of the nation, exists only to conserve the monopoly by the capitalist class of the wealth taken from the workers, the working class must organise consciously and politically for the conquest of the powers of government, national and local, in order that this machinery, including these forces, may be converted from an instrument of oppression into the agent of emancipation and the overthrow of privilege, aristocratic and plutocratic.

That as political parties are but the expression of class interests, and as the interest of the working class is diametrically opposed to the interests of all sections of the master class, the party seeking working-class emancipation must be hostile to every other party.

THE SOCIALIST PARTY of Great Britain, therefore, enters the field of political action determined to wage war against all other political parties, whether alleged labour or avowedly capitalist, and calls upon the members of the working class of this country to muster under its banner to the end that a speedy termination may be wrought to the system which deprives them of the fruits of their labour, and that poverty may give place to comfort, privilege to equality, and slavery to freedom.

Those agreeing with the above principles and desiring enrolment in the Party should apply for membership form to secretary of nearest branch or at Head Office.

THE Socialist Standard

The Official Organ of **THE SOCIALIST PARTY** of Great Britain.

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LONDON, JULY, 1931.

[MONTHLY, TWOPENCE.]

THE ECONOMIC CRISIS AND THE WORKERS

There is one respect at least in which the "New Party" founded by Sir Oswald Mosley is exactly like all of the older non-Socialist parties. That is in its emphasis on the trade depression as a reason for putting aside the question of Socialism. The argument is that capitalism is in the throes of an unprecedented crisis. Ruin stares not only the worker, but also the employers, in the face. Great Britain must either take some novel and drastic steps to escape from the threatening disaster, or grave decline will follow and this country will become a third-rate power. "Let us," say the New Party leaders, "defer the consideration of Socialism until we have stabilised capitalism once more."

This is a very old story—as old as capitalism. In the eyes of the defenders of capitalism no time is an opportune time for the workers to interest themselves in their class interests. And many organisations engaged nominally in protecting the workers have shared the views of the capitalists on this question.

There have been at least eleven marked industrial crises in the past 100 years. Every one of them has shown the same general characteristics. Every one of them has been viewed as a sign of irretrievable ruin, and every one has been used to dissuade the workers from looking towards Socialism.

There was one great crisis during 1829, at a time, that is, when this country was strongly Protectionist. Listen to the description given by William Huskisson in a letter dated December 30th, 1829 (pub-

lished in the Huskisson Papers, p. 310):—

I consider the country to be in a most unsatisfactory state, that some great convulsion must soon take place. . . . I hear of the distress of the agricultural, the manufactural, the commercial, the West-Indian, and all trading interests. . . . I am told land can neither pay rent nor taxes nor rates, that no merchant has any legitimate business. . . . I am also told that the whole race of London shopkeepers are nearly ruined.

Huskisson, sometime President of the Board of Trade, was one of those who believed that England must go over to Free Trade. The Liberal manufacturers, who had an interest in Free Trade because it meant cheap food and therefore low wages, urged the workers to neglect their own class interests and to support the demand for the abolition of the Corn Laws, which restricted the import of corn from abroad. The workers did this. They listened to the specious argument that they should only concern themselves with so-called practical, bread-and-butter questions. And the result was the building up of fabulous fortunes for the manufacturers and the continuation of poverty for themselves.

After Free Trade was introduced, the crises recurred periodically as before, although it is often represented by present-day politicians that everything was satisfactory during this period when Britain was the "workshop of the world."

The following is Lord Randolph Churchill's account of the crisis of 1884, in a speech at Blackpool (published in *The Times*, June 10th, 1931):—

We are suffering from a depression of trade extending as far back as 1874, ten years of trade

depression, and the most hopeful, either among our capitalists or our artisans, can discover no signs of a revival. Your iron industry is dead, dead as mutton. Your coal industries, which depend greatly on the iron industries, are languishing. Your silk industry is dead, assassinated by the foreigner. Your woollen industry is in articulo mortis, gasping, struggling. Your cotton industry is seriously sick. The shipbuilding industry, which held out longest of all, is come to a standstill. Turn your eyes where you will, survey any branch of British industry you like, you will find signs of mortal disease.

The difference between Huskisson and Churchill was that Churchill saw the remedy in a return to Protection! Large numbers of workers, seeing that Free Trade had not brought prosperity to them, were persuaded to assist this section of the employers in their campaign against Free Trade; while other workers sided with the Liberal Free Traders and supported their campaigns for the 1909 Land Tax and against the House of Lords. In the meantime working-class interests were neglected as usual.

After the War came the industrial crisis of 1921-22, which moved the Prime Minister, Mr. Bonar Law, to assert in a speech at Glasgow in December, 1922, that—

There is almost no business that is making profits to-day.

In May, 1921, the percentage of insured workers unemployed rose to as much as 23 per cent.—higher than it has been in any subsequent month, including 1930, and 1931 to date. There were, in May, 1921, 2½ million unemployed.

The present crisis, which follows 10 years of unemployment never appreciably below the million line, is similar to the others and will take the same general course.

Industrial depressions are not evidences of capitalist poverty or capitalist weakness. They will not of themselves result in the collapse of the capitalist system, and only a misunderstanding of the nature of crises leads the workers to slacken their efforts to maintain wages at those times. Trade depression arises simply from the over-production of goods in relation to the demands of the market. The world is overloaded with goods for which purchasers cannot be found. Purchasers cannot be found because the workers, who have unsatisfied needs, have only a limited amount of money with which to buy, and the wealthiest section of the propertied

class, who have the bulk of the purchasing power, have no unsatisfied needs. Once depression begins, prices are forced down and every holder of goods seeks to realise them at all costs. The consequent feeling of insecurity causes the rich to curtail even their normal expenditure, thus aggravating the depression and adding to unemployment.

Many industrial capitalists suffer a decline in their profits owing to curtailed sales, while money-lending capitalists on the whole improve their position.

The crisis is overcome simply because the manufacturers close down their factories and turn the workers out to join the unemployed. Then, when the accumulations of goods have been slowly dissipated, production begins again in response to the newly evinced demand, and the crisis is, for the time being, over.

This is a process which is prolonged by wage reductions, and made more acute by the constant improvements in productivity of industry which increase the volume of surplus goods.

All the parties which accept the popular view of crises necessarily find themselves pursuing courses contrary to working-class interests. The Communists believe, and indeed hope, that the crises will wreck capitalism, and they therefore propagate their dangerous doctrine of waiting fatalistically for the breaking-point of capitalism, at which point they will take to the streets and challenge the armed forces. The basis of the doctrine is unsound. Crises are not the ruin of capitalism, but merely correctives to its contradictions. Capitalism and its crises can, and will, go on indefinitely until the workers take conscious steps to end the system.

The other parties—Liberal, Tory, Labour and I.L.P., and the later rivals, the Empire Free Traders and the Mosley Party—all preach the doctrine that the workers must at times of crisis take joint action with the capitalists in order to save a desperate situation. As this usually means, in practice, taking lower wages and working harder, it is not only anti-working-class, but also has the effect of prolonging the crisis.

The Socialist Party tells the workers that Socialism is the only remedy for their troubles. There is no time which is not a proper time for them to work for Socialism. This is true whatever the

excuse offered by defenders of capitalism. Whether the crisis is a war crisis or a trade crisis, the Socialist Party will continue to preach Socialism. Workers who

understand the working of capitalism will see through the excuses to the capitalist interests behind them, and will help us with our task.

H.

THE SOCIALIST FORUM.

SOCIALISM AND DISTRIBUTION

A correspondent (N. T. T.) asks us the following questions about the organisation of society on a Socialist basis:—

(1) There are always people, in any stage of civilization, who do not like and do not tone with their surroundings. People live to-day who would be much more happy lying in the sun all day, and picking their food from the trees. I wonder what would be considered the fair share of work for such people? Would they, desiring none of the absurd luxuries of mechanised and artificial civilization, be yet forced to do as much to maintain such a state as any lover of cigars, motor-cars, and epicurean meals.

(2) All valuable (not in a monetary sense) works of art, will not be able to be kept in public museums. It is barely possible to consider all our paintings and sculptures thus placed—but for whom are our few Stradivarius violins, to mention but one type of art which cannot be left to rot in a museum? There are, as I have said, but a few; but there is a multitude of people who ache to possess them. And this is not greed. It is the very natural desire of the artist to express himself through as fine a medium as possible.

We cannot call those things details, and pass them over. They touch very vital chords of human nature, and must be considered.

REPLY.

Our correspondent's first question is phrased in such a way that it tends to obscure the real issue. We are asked to consider the case of the man who will desire "none of the absurd luxuries of mechanised and artificial civilisation," and who, therefore, will wish to avoid work to make them possible. He wants, instead, to lie in the sun all day and feed himself from the trees! If the illustration is to be taken literally, it is itself absurd and impossible. Anyone who tried to live like this in England would have a very strenuous, brief and painful existence. He would be compelled to avoid all cultivated plants, because these are the products of our "mechanised and artificial civilisation," and would be so busy trying to secure a sufficiency of uncultivated but edible articles, that he would have no time for sunning. He would doubtless soon fall ill. Moreover, not the social organisa-

tion, but the climate would effectively prohibit his mode of life for 90 per cent. of the time. But if he then decides to seek sunnier climes, he will again have to fall back on those—to him—detestable mechanical devices, the steamship or the aeroplane.

The real problem is that of the persons whose tastes do not fully coincide with those of their neighbours—but that includes everybody. Everybody would want some but not others of the articles produced by society's co-operative effort, and would therefore appreciate the need for give and take. It is a problem implicit in every form of human society. The adjustments will be easier when the luxuries of some are not obtained at the cost of the necessities of others. Now the poverty of the poor is forcibly imposed on them in order to safeguard the privileges of the propertied class.

Our correspondent's second question has nothing to do with Socialism. We are not advocating Socialism on the ground that we have discovered a perfect method of dividing half-a-dozen Strads among a multitude of people. In the nature of the case there is no method of satisfying the desire of the multitude (if, indeed, they exist) who ache to possess a Strad. What Socialism will do will be to remove society's means of production and distribution from the ownership and control of a small minority. Having done that, we do not think that the foundations of Socialist society will rock on account of the unsolved problem of the Strads and first editions and other unique relics of this, that, or the other dead hero. Capitalism gives the Strads to its most successful exploiters who can afford to pay monopoly prices—but nobody seems to mind very much. Artist-craftsmen will again find an opening for the production of masterpieces under the new social conditions.

* * *

DO WE NEED AN EMOTIONAL UPSURGE?

In the following letter a correspondent from Tottenham seeks to explain why Socialist propaganda does not make rapid headway:—

To the Editor.

Sir,—The teachings of Socialism seem to be making little headway among the workers. Although the solution to the economic evils which afflict them is pointed, they seem little interested and crowd the cinemas and football matches, responding at election times to the attractively dressed programmes of parliamentary parties.

Something in the Socialist estimate is lacking, and I think the deficiency is explained by the discoveries of modern psychology. Instead of man being a rational creature who, perceiving his interests, economic or otherwise, acts in accordance with them, his behaviour, his opinions and attitudes are the outcome, largely, of psychic needs and conflicts; are adaptations of thwarted instinctive urges, and assume a far from rational character.

The researches of modern psychologists seem to unite in proclaiming the greater part played in man's life by unconscious trends, and the study of psycho-neuroses have thrown into relief the tremendous power of seemingly trivial experiences to influence reaction in all sorts of situations.

A sense of inferiority arising from some physical defect, or unimpressiveness of appearance may lead one to join forces with an organization which gives scope for venting hostility against an inconsiderate environment. Many speakers of the S.P.G.B. have impressed me as having found within its ranks a means of rescuing themselves from an oblivion to which their appearance and mental attributes would otherwise have doomed them. They gain a satisfying distinction by being "not as others."

Experiences of a sexual character, dislike of certain individuals, jealousy, etc., are elements which find plenty of consolation in Socialism.

The class character of Society and the assumption of superiority which goes with wealth, so provoking and resented by Socialists, are accepted by the majority. The supporters of the Arsenal are feeling quite superior because "their" team has topped the League. Following the fortunes of teams, satisfying a multiplicity of psychic needs at the theatre, they are not attracted by the rational programme of Socialism, for it holds, but for few, a means of meeting these psychic needs.

The working class abounds in types, and it is a cardinal error to reduce it to an economic homogeneity. The critical, the cynical, the aggressive, the submissive (attitudes depending largely on previous experiences not necessarily of an economic nature), find satisfaction in exercise, whether it be in politics, sport or love.

Socialism must make an emotional appeal, in which all types can find expression; purely intellectual approach, its appeal to rationality are barren. Revolutions are impossible without emotional upsurges.

Yours faithfully,
R. HOBSBAUM.

REPLY.

Our correspondent does not tell us the date of the dividing line between what he calls "modern psychology" and its not so modern predecessor, but we can assure him that his "discovery" is not new. Members of the Socialist Party were hearing this tale from members of the I.L.P. and the Labour Party twenty and more years ago. And that fact has its importance. These people were going to make their emotional appeal and get Socialism quickly, rather than follow the method we advocated, of informing the workers about Socialist principles. They and their successors and imitators, the Communists, have made their emotional appeals and suffered their emotional upsurges times without number, but our correspondent, curiously enough, omits to dwell upon the result of it all. May we, then, remind him of one spectacular success achieved by the emotionalists—the great war fever of 1914, aided by the Labour leaders and prepared for by the previous years of Labour Party and I.L.P. appeals to emotion?

Our correspondent is wrong in thinking that the workers do not act in accordance with what they believe to be their interests. The trouble is that they mistake the capitalists' interests for their own. Only knowledge will alter that, and the emotional appealers do not give that knowledge and, in the main, do not themselves possess it.

We are asked to believe that the statement of Socialist principles fails to appeal to the mass of workers because they accept the capitalists' assumption of superiority, and appeals only to those who do resent it and have a "sense of inferiority." Why, then, does our correspondent himself find that not all the members of the S.P.G.B. are like that? Why only some of them? If the Socialist appeal does attract some of these workers who are without a "sense of inferiority," why not others, and why not eventually large numbers? This we are not told.

We are told that we must not reduce the workers "to an economic homogeneity." The answer is that we do not, but the capitalist system does. The worker may possess any or all of the characteristics enumerated in the letter, but, being without property, it will avail him nothing. He will remain a member of the

subject class and will find himself up against the inevitable disabilities arising therefrom. Knowledge of Socialism is the necessary preliminary to emancipation. It is not our avoidance of emotional appeal that delays our progress; on the contrary, it is largely the confusion spread by the emotional upsurges and the despair born of disappointed hopes that is responsible for the workers' indifference to the Socialist message.

* * *

SOME QUESTIONS ABOUT GOVERNMENT.

A correspondent put the following questions:—

- (1) Do you believe in the coercion of the minority by the majority?
- (2) Do you agree that the best governed are those governed with the least amount of laws?
- (3) Do you favour voluntary or compulsory co-operation?
- (4) As man is unable to govern himself, how can you claim that he is capable of governing others?
- (5) As all human laws must be backed by force (otherwise ceasing to be operative), how can you claim the attainment of freedom under majority rule?

Yours, etc.,

H. ANDERTON.

REPLY.

(1) In a conflict the stronger party prevails, irrespective of anybody's "beliefs." If, as is usually the case, it is the majority which is stronger, then the majority will prevail over the minority in the event of a clash.

(2) We are seeking to establish Socialism, not seeking to alter or improve the method by which one class governs or coerces another class. From the workers' standpoint it matters little whether the ruling class apply the coercion through many laws or few. The essential thing is that the capitalists—having been voted into power by the workers—have the means to enforce their laws. When the means of production and distribution become socially owned, it will not be necessary to maintain a coercive State for the subjugation of one class by another. There will be no classes. Society will find it convenient and necessary to formulate rules for the guidance of the individual in social affairs, and will naturally aim at simplicity and brevity in the formulation of these rules.

(3) The meaning of the question is not clear, but where the choice exists of achieving an object either with compulsion or without compulsion, it is obvious that the latter method is to be preferred because it avoids provoking resistance.

(4) We have not said that man is "unable to govern himself," and we are not sure what our correspondent means by the phrase. As for the question of his ability to govern others, it is only necessary to consider the ability shown by the capitalist class to govern the working class. How, in face of that fact, can anyone deny so obvious a truth?

(5) All human laws do not have to be backed by force or cease to be operative. Custom is an important and, in some cases at least, as efficient a factor as force to secure observance. For thousands of years custom was the social rule without a coercive State behind it. When we talk about attaining freedom, we make it quite clear what we mean, viz., the abolition of private ownership and control of the means of life. Majority rule will obtain when society is based on social ownership, and is not in any way incompatible with social ownership. If by freedom our correspondent means the "freedom" of the individual or the minority to disregard the commonly agreed practices necessary to the existence and well-being of society, we do not claim that such an absurdity is possible under any form of society.

* * *

THE LABOUR PARTY, PARLIAMENT, AND OTHER MATTERS.

A correspondent, who signs himself "Ignoramus" (Wood Green), asks a series of questions:—

- (1) I have my doubts about the advisability of damaging the Labour Party. I think you will agree they have done as much as they dare under the present system and to convince the public that they are not working for their interests, may result in the return of the Conservatives. Until you are in a position to put your ideas into practice, let us have the Labour Party.
- (2) You have no representatives in Parliament. How, then, do you propose to bring these things to pass? Illegally? By revolutionary methods?
- (3) Why not have a membership form handy at your meetings to enrol recruits?
- (4) May I mention an idea of mine? This state which you aim at will be eventually reached by the aid of religion. When we have all become convinced of the reality of God... then

will come in reality the brotherhood of man, which is to my untutored mind another name for Socialism.

REPLY.

(1) Whether the Labour Government have or have not done as much as capitalism would permit them to do, is not an important question, although, incidentally, they have not been conspicuously successful even as a party aiming at the smooth administration of capitalism. The important point is that neither the Labour Government nor any other Government can both retain capitalism and serve the interests of the working class. The Socialist Party would be committing suicide if it refrained from telling the workers that this is so. But it is not true that Socialist propaganda is directed solely against the Labour Party, or that it helps the Conservatives to gain power. Socialist propaganda is aimed at making Socialists, and Labour Party members who become Socialist do not leave the Labour Party for the purpose of voting Conservative, but in order to join the Socialist Party. Our correspondent is himself an illustration of our point. He has listened to Socialist speakers, but does not indicate that this has led him to vote Conservative. Nor does Socialist propaganda lead any other workers to vote Conservative, any more than it leads them to vote Labour, Liberal or Communist.

(2) There are no Socialist representatives in Parliament because there are not yet sufficient Socialists outside of Parliament to make possible the election of a Socialist on a Socialist programme. In due course there will be sufficient Socialists in the constituencies to secure Socialist representatives in Parliament.

(3) There is no difficulty in a Socialist obtaining membership of the Socialist Party either through head office or a local branch. We do not, however, enrol members in the careless manner of other parties, because, whereas their object is to make members, our object is to make Socialists. We do not want non-Socialists in our organisation.

(4) Christianity has had nearly 2,000 years in which to justify the hopes entertained by our correspondent. There were centuries in which the whole of Christendom, to all appearances, accepted the illusion of "the reality of God"—but there

was no Socialism. The chances of religion ever again having so wide and deep a hold are so remote as to be not worth considering.

The "brotherhood of man" is a phrase which means anything and everything, according to the wishes of the untutored minds which accept it. It is not a name for Socialism, but a very useful tool in the hands of the possessing class and their agents when they wish to deceive the workers into the belief that there is community of interests between the exploiters and the exploited.

If, too, our correspondent really believes that religion alone will solve our problems, why does he support a political party, the Labour Party?

We suggest that he read our pamphlet, "Socialism and Religion."

* * *

BY PARLIAMENT OR STRIKES?

C. Foster (W.8) asks whether we propose to use Parliament or to organise strikes as a means of obtaining power and introducing Socialism, both of which methods "seem to have failed so far."

The Socialist Party aims at dispossessing the propertied class of their ownership and control over society's means of living. This cannot be done while they control the armed forces and the machinery of administration. When the workers gain control of Parliament and the local councils (by means of the vote), they will have disarmed the capitalist class, and can then set about organising society on a different basis. It is true that Parliament has failed to do this in the past, for the simple reason that Parliament has never yet been controlled by a party with a mandate to work for Socialism. The Labour M.P.s, without a single exception, asked and received a mandate from the electors to reform capitalism. The electors are getting what they asked for. That they do not like it is our reason for anticipating that they will, sooner or later, decide to try Socialism instead.

Strikes are in a different category. The usefulness of Trade Unions lies in the direction of resisting encroachments by the capitalist class on the workers' standard of living. In this they have been partly successful. They might, with greater knowledge, be more useful, but their

potential usefulness has limits. The employers, being wealthy, can, if they deem it worth while, afford to prolong disputes to a point which means starvation for the workers. They can do this because they own the instruments of production and the accumulated products, and have the forces of the State to back them up. Trade Unions can serve as more or less useful instruments of resistance, but they cannot, in their nature, serve as means by which the workers can obtain control of the machinery of government. This must be done by Socialists organised in the Socialist Party.

ED. COMM.

LIVES AND PROFITS.

A glaring example of the worthlessness of the Labour Government to the workers was afforded at a conference on "Safety in Mines," held recently in Sheffield and presided over by no less a dignitary than the egregious Mr. Emanuel Shinwell, His Majesty's Minister of Mines. The proceedings were reported in the *Sheffield Daily Telegraph* for April 13th.

The participants in the "confab" included colliery owners and managers, mines inspectors, and union officials. His Majesty's Chief Inspector, Sir Henry Walker, placed his finger upon the core of the problem as gently as possible when he pointed out that "he was not satisfied that conditions in the mines were such as to induce the men to be as careful as they should be in relation to the risks they ran"; and then, to mollify owners and men in one breath, suggested that it was all due to the miners' reckless British pluck. Other contributions to the discussion dealt with the special risks attaching to different phases of the miner's tasks, such as shot-firing, hauling, roof shoring, etc. Finally, however, Mr. E. Hough, Vice-President of the Yorkshire Miners' Association, introduced a breath of reality by pointing out that the basic economic factors had not been dealt with. His remarks are not reported *in extenso*, but readers would have to be dense indeed not to perceive that the risks of mining are largely bound up with the piece-rate system, which is maintained because it is most profitable to the owners. When men have to work hell-for-leather in order to make their wages cover the cost of bare subsistence, they cannot afford to behave as daintily and cautiously as if they were

in a ballroom. The risks of mining can be got rid of only when it is no longer conducted for profit, but that involves the introduction of Socialism.

Then up spake Mr. Shinwell. "It took him all his time to refrain from strong comment upon the speech they had just heard." He was "much perturbed at the suggestion that the conference had avoided anything" or been animated by any other desire than to get at the truth about accidents. He emphasised the need for co-operation of masters and men. "Economic factors could be discussed in the proper place."

One can equally well imagine a bespectacled professor discovering the mangled corpse of an antelope upon the veldt and thus addressing the retreating form of Mr. Felix Leo: "Respected Sir, I have not the slightest doubt that the laceration endured by this unfortunate animal is purely accidental. I earnestly solicit your co-operation in removing the risk of its re-occurrence wherever possible. At the same time I strongly resent any suggestion made by vegetarians that it has any connection with your healthy appetite."

E. B.

TO OUR READERS. PLEASE NOTE

The "Socialist Standard" can be obtained from the following Newsagents:—

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BELFAST.

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All communications for the Executive Committee, Subscriptions for the SOCIALIST STANDARD, Articles, and Correspondence submitted for insertion therein, should be addressed—The Socialist Party of Great Britain, 42, Great Dover Street, London, S.E.1, to whom Money Orders should be made payable.

The meetings of the Executive Committee are held at the Head Office, every Tuesday, at 7.30 p.m.

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JULY,



1931

RUSSIAN ILLUSIONS

It is claimed by many that the Russian Government has discovered a means of developing Russian industry on Socialist lines and free from the disturbing effects of the world trading conditions that affect the other capitalist countries. Actually, the more Russian industry enters into the world market as importer and exporter, the more Russian industrial conditions will be affected by conditions outside.

For example, the world slump in prices has hit Russian industry as badly as any, and has necessitated hasty and difficult modifications of the so-called Five-Year Plan. Estimates were based upon the exporting of certain quantities of goods at certain prices, the yield from which was to be used for machinery and other imports. Owing to the unforeseen slump, Russian exports in January and February of 1931 decreased in value by nearly one-fifth as compared with the corresponding period of 1930, and this in spite of a big increase in the quantities of goods exported. The output of the exporting industries had to be increased above the planned amount owing to the fall in the prices obtained for the exported goods in the world market, and in order to pay for the imports. The machinery and other imports either have not fallen in price at all, have not fallen as heavily, or have

been contracted for at a stated price. The final result has been that imports have had to be curtailed. The imports for January and February, 1931, were one-third below those for January and February, 1930. Thus does capitalism frustrate attempts at planning.

Mr. Fenner Brockway, the new Chairman of the I.L.P., writing in the *New Leader* (April 17th), assumes that Russian industry is being run on a "Socialist basis." This is quite incorrect and indicates either a misreading of the Russian industrial system or—more probably—a failure to grasp what constitutes Socialism. In Russia, as elsewhere, goods are produced, not for use, but for sale. The producers are a wage-earning class with no effective control over the machinery of production. There is great inequality, as in other capitalist countries. The first charge on industry is the payment of interest to the investors in the State loans. The way in which inequality of wealth is growing is shown by the increasing yield from the graduated income tax. Already the yield is over £60 millions a year. The Government is now itself catering for the wants of monied people by opening shops at which goods are sold at rates far above the official prices.

Mr. Walter Duranty, of the *New York Times*, telegraphing from Moscow, says:

In the large cities, industrial centres and construction camps the food ration of the masses is adequate for health and can readily be supplemented by anyone with money.

In the larger centres the authorities are attempting to meet the situation by opening a kind of "State NEP" stores, where food and commodities are sold well above ration prices but below the rates of the "free markets" which the "State NEP" stores are intended to replace.

(*New York Times*, April 3.)

The Moscow Correspondent of the *News-Chronicle* (April 13th) gives further information about these stores:—

New State-owned profiteering stores—selling to anybody with no questions asked about your ration book or whether you are an "economic outlaw"—went on charging 8s. a pound for frozen chickens; 25s. a pound for an inferior sort of cheese; and 6s. a pound for poor salt herrings.

Mr. Albert Coates, the musical conductor, who recently returned from Russia, gives information about the prices a section of the population are able to pay for seats at the opera. Speaking to a *Daily Telegraph* representative, he said:—

Many people still have a great deal of money in Russia, but they have to be careful. There is

little or no actual starvation, but there is a system of food rationing.

The price of seats in the theatre ranged from 24s. downwards. At every performance—and there is one every night and two on Sundays for nine months in the year—the opera theatres are packed, although the majority of the populace are said to be penniless.

Beautifully gowned women and well-dressed men still continue to adorn the front rows of the Grand Theatre, Moscow, every night.

(*Daily Telegraph*, April 1.)

While the Russian workers are told that they must pull in their belts and reap their reward later on when the Five-Year Plan (or the second Five-Year Plan) is completed, the highly paid administrative and technical officials and the investors in State loans get their benefit now.

These are not the features of Socialism, but of capitalism. Before they get Socialism, the Russian workers will have to tread the same path of disillusionment leading to knowledge that is being trodden by the workers in other countries.

DONATIONS TO PARTY FUNDS.

W.C.F., 3s. 11d.; Battersea Branch, £2; A.W.A., 5s.; W.H.P., 2s. 6d.; B.F.L., 3s.; Leyton Branch, 8s.; A.F.F., 2s. 6d.; Wallis, 2s.; Johnson, 2s.; H.B., 1s. 3d.; West Ham Branch, £4 17s. 3d.; West Ham Branch, £4; W. Quelch, 2s. 6d.; A. H. Golding, 10s.; J. Clark, 4s. 9d.; A.R., 10s.; W., 1s.; Chicks, 4s. 6d.; R.M.I.L., 2s. 6d.; W.A., £1; B.C., 4s.; A.B.D., 5s.; Battersea Branch, 2s. 8d.; W.H.S., 2s. 6d.; R.F., 1s.; E.B., 2s.; Colindale, 1s.; Clark, 6d.; Manchall, 6s.; Tuborn, 12s. 5d.; Battersea, £2; Connelly, 2s. 6d.; A. H. Simpson, £1; Southend Branch, 10s.; E. Pryce, 10s.; Burnt-oak, 1s.; Central Branch, 6s.; Stevens, 2s. 6d.; G.H., 5s.; F.I.H., £1; Ambrose, 4s.; Lucas, 1s.; J.E., 1s. 4d.; G.E.G., 3s.; Steele, 2s. 6d.; H.H., £1; A.R.S., 2s. 6d.; S.H., 6d.; A.F.F., 2s. 6d.; Islington, 3s.; Isk, 6d.; Milbourne, 2s. 6d.; Garland, 6d.; Burton, 1s.; Fielding, 2s. 6d.; B.W., 7s. 6d.; G. Watson, 2s. 6d.; C. Meadar, 1s.; C. McL., 1s.; Anon., 6d.; H.S.R.K., 15s.; Leyton Branch, 8s.; Fairlight, 10s.; F. Smith, 10s.; G. Barson, 5s.; A.W., 1s.; Percy, 1s.; G.C.G., 3s.; G.H., 5s.; R.F., 2s.; India, 17s. 6d.; Percy, 1s. 6d.; Synot, 6d.; W. Shaw, 1s.; S. Harris, 3s. 3d.; Central Branch, 8s.; G.C.G., 3s.; J. Clark, 3s. 6d.; Manchester, 1s. 2d.; C.S., 2s.; Watford Branch, £1 13s.; G.H., 7s. 6d.; F. Sherry, 2s. 6d.; V. Wilson, 5s. 1d.; A. Johnstone, 2s. 6d.; Percy, 1s.; Mrs. C. & G., £2 3s. 8d.; W.H.B., 2s. 6d.; F.J.H., £1; Battersea Branch, £2; Grays reader, 2s.; A.A.F., 2s. 6d.; G. Reid, 1s. 6d.; G.C.G., 1s. 3d.; M.M., 5s.; W.C., 10s.; J. Bott, 17s. 6d.; Central Branch, £1; Porter, 2s.; S. Bozier, 2s. 6d.; E.H., £1; Martin, 6s.; Askwith, 2s. 6d.; Rimmington, 2s. 6d.; Rimmington, 10s.; T.T.McK., 5s.; Wood Green, 2s.; F.R.B., 10s.; Battersea Branch, 5s. 6d.; Battersea Branch, 5s.; West Ham Branch, 15s.; West Ham Branch, 9s.; Battersea Branch, 5s.; J.B., 6d.; Battersea Branch, 4s. 6d.; Battersea Branch, 10s.; Wood Green, 2s.; West Ham, 11s. 6d.

THE SOCIALIST PARTY
versus THE NEW PARTY.

An audience of over 500 listened to a public debate on Sunday evening, June 14th, at the Stratford Town Hall, between the New (Mosley) Party and the Socialist Party of Great Britain, on the question which of the two parties should be supported by the working class.

Mr. Stuart Barr (who spoke second) represented the New Party. He said it was not his business to defend the capitalist system or to enter into academic discussion on Socialism, capitalism, or any other "ism." He believed that affairs in this country and all over the world had reached a stage of crisis when it was the soundest realism to enter into the New Party's immediate policy to do something now to give the workers, not Socialism, which everyone admits they do not want, but work, wages, and economic security. Disaster could be avoided only by all classes sinking their immediate differences and pulling together to organise national resources in such a way that no one section had undue power over any other.

First, Parliament must be converted from a talkshop into a workshop, one section to deal with social and political matters, and the other exclusively with economic matters. This section would establish Import Boards to decide what tariffs were necessary to enable British industries to compete with all the other countries by tariff walls, to put the manufacturer on his feet, and so enable the workers' standard of living to be raised.

The workers should support the New Party because it has a policy which can be applied now, immediately. All sections must co-operate to control the economic forces of capitalism and to guide the ship of State away from imminent disaster.

The case for the Socialist Party, presented by Comrade E. Hardy, was based on the irreconcilable conflict of interests between the working class, who produce all wealth, and the capitalist class, who own the instruments of production and the wealth produced. It was shown in 1904 by Mr. Leo Money, M.P. (now Sir Leo Money) that nearly one-half of the national income was enjoyed by but one-ninth of the population. In other words, out of every £1 of wealth produced by the workers, one capitalist keeps nearly

10s., and 8 workers divide the remaining 10s. between them, receiving just about enough to maintain them as efficient workers. Professor Henry Clay in 1925 showed a like inequality still in being.

The problem of the capitalists was to sell their goods in limited markets. Competition among them led to the adoption of labour-saving machinery (and unemployment), to periodical over-production crises, and to recurrent danger of war.

All the will-o'-the-wisp reforms of the other political parties tried out during the last 100 years were futile to deal with the evils rooted in a profit-making social system based on the exploitation of one class by another. The only remedy was for society to own and democratically control the means of production, to produce for use and not for profit.

The New Party's talk about the "national resources" and about improving trade does not touch the problems of the workers. The so-called "national resources" are the private property of the capitalist class. It would be the capitalists who would reap the benefit of any improvement of trade. In Germany, while trade was booming last year, wages were being reduced still further.

Nor was capitalism a "sinking ship." The figures given in the *Economist* showed that profits had not suffered appreciably during the "depression." Depressions and crises come and go, but capitalism will remain just so long as the workers continue to send back to Parliament the agents of the master class. Leaders of the New Party openly declared they did not oppose capitalism, but aimed to put the industrial capitalists "on their feet." This means opposing the interests of the working class.

The Socialist Party of Great Britain alone of all Parties had consistently maintained, amidst the confusion of capitalist parties old and "new," that the only hope of the workers is Socialism.

The collection of £3 12s. more than covered expenses, and literature to the value of 32s. was sold. F. E.

PAMPHLETS FOR SALE.

Value, Price and Profit	Post free.
.. Marx. 7d.	
Socialism: Utopian and Scientific	Engels. 7d.
Wage-Labour and Capital	.. Marx. 5d.
Causes of Belief in God	.. Lafargue. 4d.

SOCIALISM v. CO-OPERATION.

A correspondent writes, asking what is our attitude towards the Co-operative movement.

He expresses his inability to understand what Co-operators mean when they refer to the "Co-operative Commonwealth," and asks: (1) If he is correct in assuming that what is meant is "a state of society under which Co-operatism would own the means of production and distribution, and would therefore be a rival (or sort of rival) to the Socialist Commonwealth that is to be?" and (2) If the Co-operative movement is capable of producing or evolving a state of Socialism or something akin thereto?"

First, let us state that we share our correspondent's difficulty of not being able to understand what Co-operators mean by the "Co-operative Commonwealth."

To answer the first question. Socialism being a system of society in which the means of production and distribution will be the common property of society, there will be neither need nor room for the production of goods for sale and profit. Society, i.e., its members, would not buy from nor sell to themselves the things produced and owned by them. Co-operative Societies, therefore, will die with the capitalist system, of which they are a part, and from which they cannot be separated.

If by the second question our correspondent means that the Co-operative Societies might gradually displace their capitalist competitors, a few figures might be interesting.

It is estimated that the total capitalised wealth of property owners in England is approximately £25,000 millions (which is twice the amount of 40 years ago and four times that of 80 years ago); of this, the capital invested in Co-operative Societies amounts to £140 millions (*People's Year Book*, 1928), or about one one-hundred-and-eightieth part of the whole! And this is the position after nearly 90 years of Co-operation! The "evolving to a state of Socialism or something akin thereto" seems likely to prove a protracted business. But this is not all. The Co-operative Societies are largely retail distributors of goods which are supplied to them and produced by "private" capitalist interests. In the year 1926 the total Co-op. sales amounted to £294,302,814. Of this amount, only £5,700,241 represented goods

which were actually produced by the Co-operative Societies (*People's Year Book*, 1928). In actual fact, then, 98 per cent. of the goods sold by the Co-ops. are supplied by their capitalist "rivals." While this is so, there is no danger to "private" capitalist interests from the Co-ops. If the Co-ops. ever could, and did, assume forms dangerous to competitive capitalist interests, then the full blast of the competitive power of the huge trusts and combines, with their tremendous resources and thousands of millions of capital, would soon make itself felt. That they do not do so is because the Co-ops. are not dangerous to capitalist interests, nor to the capitalist system of society.

Let us assume that the Co-ops. might some day secure the trade in working-class necessities of life to the full limit of the working-class income. There is then the fact that the wages of the workers represent only one-third of the total national income. There is still the remaining two-thirds untouched.

Further, if by economic methods the Co-operative movement could eat into capitalism, why was a Co-operative political party formed? In this connection our correspondent might learn how much importance is to be attached to the use of the phrase, "Co-operative Commonwealth," from the fact that the Co-op. Party is the political ally of the Labour Party. Its members run as Labour candidates on the Labour Party's programme and are returned by Labour votes.

Production for sale and profit is capitalism, and means wage slavery, with its consequent evils for the workers (including workers employed by the Co-operative Societies). The Socialist Party, being organised for the abolition of capitalism, is therefore opposed to the Co-operative movement.

H. W.

"Socialism and Religion."

This unique Party Pamphlet is now reprinted at a price within the reach of all.

48 pages. TWOPENCE. 2d. post free.

EMANCIPATION OR PALLIATION?

About five years ago the Socialist Party published a pamphlet entitled "Socialism," which examined the position of the working class and indicated the only way to effect a change in that position. The Communist Party has recently issued a pamphlet, professing to cover similar ground, entitled "Capitalism or Socialism in Britain."

An old tag has it that comparisons are odious. Let us be odious.

Our pamphlet contains forty-eight pages. Mr. Palme Dutt's effort consists of only thirty-two similar pages. The Socialist Party's pamphlet is sold for 2d. The Communist Party charge 3d. In spite of their superior financial resources, they want half as much again for two-thirds of the material. So much for quantity. Now for quality.

The Communist pamphlet contains no actual information that has not been given by the S.P.G.B., but it does contain statements which are false. Mr. Dutt repeats the long-ago exploded legend that Socialism has been established in Russia. We are told that the workers there own and control the means of production, in spite of the fact that the Soviet Government, like other capitalist Governments, has a large and growing national debt upon which it pays high rates of interest to the investors. It has just announced its intention of floating another £160,000,000 loan, upon which it will pay 10 per cent. (*Manchester Guardian Weekly*, June 12th). Although it is common knowledge that agricultural production in Russia is still largely in the hands of independent peasant concerns, and that the so-called collective and State farms are run on capitalist lines, Mr. Dutt glibly informs us that all production is organised according to a single plan (p. 16). "All production," he goes on, "is directed solely to supplying the workers' needs. It is for use, not profit." Yet a few paragraphs further on he speaks of "the mighty Socialist productive machine flooding the world with cheap goods with which they (the capitalists) cannot compete." Perhaps next time Mr. Dutt deals with this matter he will be kind enough to explain why British, American and German capitalists in particular are supplying Russia with the machinery upon which the success of its

economic plans depends. Is it because they have conceived a laudable desire to assist in the "building up of Socialism"?

The Labour Party, of course, comes in for a good deal of Mr. Dutt's criticism, but he keeps judiciously quiet concerning the electoral support which the Communist Party gave to the Labour Party for years. We have yet to hear what the working class (or even the Communist Party) have gained by this activity. In passing, it is interesting to note that where, as at Pontypridd and St. Rollox, by-elections are fought minus a Communist candidate, the Communist Party have taken to recommending the workers to write "Communist" across their ballot papers. Communist champions have, in the past, been remarkably fond of sneering at this form of action when advocated by the S.P.G.B. Now that their support has been ruthlessly spurned by the Labour Party, they have no choice but "to add" (in their own words) "to the gaiety of returning officers."

While the Communist Party was busily engaged in 1923 and 1924 in securing the return to Parliament of ex-Coalition Government office-holders, such as Clynes and Henderson (thus proving false to the Third International's slogan, "Remember the Imperialist War"), the Socialist Party was consistently opposing the Labour Party. Our withers are unwrung, therefore, by Mr. Dutt's diatribe against "Socialist Imperialism." Unlike his party, we have never had truck nor lot with any such monstrous hybrid. We can, therefore, criticise his support of Indian Nationalism with a clean record so far as working-class interests are concerned. The maintenance of the British Empire is no concern of ours, but neither is "the national liberation of the colonial peoples," which Mr. Dutt describes as "the first duty of free workers of Britain." Experience of Nationalist movements from Ireland to China convinces us that the workers in these respective countries have nothing to gain by giving them support. Mr. Dutt attempts to deny that national liberation "means the strengthening of the native exploiters against the masses." "On the contrary," he says, "it is just British imperialism that maintains, buttresses and builds its power on alliance with the most reactionary blood-sucking native elements in each country—the decaying Indian

princes, the priestly powers, the landlords (often created artificially by British rule), the middlemen traders, the moneylenders. Remove the sword of British Imperialism which maintains and protects these, and the working masses will soon deal with them and advance to Socialism" (p. 30). It is necessary to note that he leaves unmentioned the newer industrial capitalist element who are the strongest supporters of the Nationalists and have probably the most to gain from some form of independence in India, and confines himself to attacking the "reactionary," i.e., the feudal and semi-feudal survivals among the Indian ruling class, and the actual agents of the British Government. He ignores, in other words, the fact that a more modern mode of exploitation is developing in India and giving rise to a demand for political changes in accordance therewith. The Indian capitalists want a place in the sun on an equality with the capitalists of the rest of the world. Mr. Dutt's pretence that the "working masses of India" are ready to "advance to Socialism," once the British are out of the way, is the most pitiful childishness.

Those of his readers who are inclined to fall for that sort of thing would do well to ponder upon the fate of the followers of the Chinese Communists in 1927. Having helped the Nationalist Kuo-Min-Tang Party in its struggle with the "reactionary elements," thousands of workers were butchered in the streets of Shanghai and Canton when the Kuo-Min-Tang was in the saddle. Whether the Indian Nationalists will succeed in acquiring a similar measure of power remains to be seen. One thing, however, is certain: their power will not be that of the workers and peasants.

The rest of Mr. Dutt's pamphlet betrays a similar conflict between his revolutionary pretensions and reformist proposals. Although he tells us in his preface "that no policy of patching up capitalism can avail," he cannot resist the temptation to suggest a few patches. Hence (on p. 28) we get the usual "Communist" demands for "minimum wages, seven-hour day, fortnight's holiday with pay, workers' control in the factories." All this, mind, as an immediate result of "workers' rule," the capitalists having been "expropriated" on page 24!

These demands, of course, do not

present anything essentially different from the programme of the I.L.P. or the Liberal Yellow Book. Scientific exploitation is quite consistent with minimum rates, shorter hours, regular holidays, and factory committees. In Russia and Germany, where the works councils have statutory rights, they have long ago been subordinated to the Trade Unions and used by the State in capitalist interests. Shop stewards prove as helpless against these interests as do Trade Union leaders. Yet Mr. Dutt, like the Communists generally, goes on chanting the stale old "industrialist" tags about building up the workers' power in the factories. Ex-shop-stewards who had to join the Communist Party because, with the post-war slump, they lost their industrial jobs, talk with their tongue in their cheeks about "workers' control"; not forgetting to mention, however, the necessity for the "leadership" of the Communist Party. That leadership has cost the workers dear wherever it has been accepted. Instead of "the capitalist State" being smashed, it has been the workers' heads, if nothing worse. The way to power is through organisation based upon knowledge. The Socialist Party through its literature assists in supplying that knowledge free from the confusing mixture of obsolete and unscientific Radicalism. Emancipation, not palliation, is our watchword. E. B.

KNOWLEDGE.

The following Books can be obtained from Head Office, post free:—

- Anarchism and Socialism. Plechanoff. 2/9.
- Capital (vols. i., ii. and iii.) 10/6 per volume.
- Communist Manifesto and Civil War in France (In one vol.) Marx and Engels. 2/9.
- Critique of Political Economy Marx. 5/6.
- Condition of the Working Class in England in 1844. Engels. 5/3.
- 18th Brumaire of Louis Napoleon. Marx. 2/9.
- Evolution of Property. Lafargue. 2/9.
- Origin of the Family, Private Property and the State. Engels. 2/9.
- Revolution and Counter-Revolution. Marx. 2/9.
- Social and Philosophical Studies. Lafargue. 2/9.
- Socialism: Utopian and Scientific. Engels. 2/9.
- Theoretical System of Karl Marx. Boudin. 5/6.
- Value, Price and Profit. Marx. 2/9 (cloth).

Other books useful to students can also be obtained from the Head Office.

THE SOCIALIST PARTY OF AUSTRALIA.

Readers in Australia are invited to communicate with the Socialist Party of Australia at Box 1440, P.O., Elizabeth St., Melbourne.

A Socialist Searchlight.

THE LABOUR MONTHLY AND THE S.P.G.B.

It has for many years been the childish policy of the Communists to attack the S.P.G.B., but never to mention us by name. The Acting Editor of the *Labour Monthly*, in a letter to a reader, has now offered an explanation for this policy. The following is an extract from the letter, which is dated April 23rd:—

We do not take notice of the Socialist Party of Great Britain as an organization, because as such it plays no part in the struggle of the working class. Individual members of it may be active in the movement, but the body itself is in the fullest sense a *sect*, which proclaims as its first principle that it is cut off from every other party. That is to say it is concerned only with a certain set of principles and not with taking part in a movement and taking part in the struggle which goes on outside it.

The strength of the Communist movement lies not least in that it is part of the working class and merely represents the most advanced part of it. The very fact that the Marxism of the S.P.G.B. is divorced from application, and that it stands outside the Communist International, condemns it as a mere propaganda body, which does not reflect the immediate problems before the workers or show in any way how they are being tackled.

The letter deserves some comment, although it has to be remembered that the *Labour Monthly* is not an official Communist organ, and represents nobody but the Editor. He is, however, a Communist and is, or was, on the Party Executive.

It is true that the S.P.G.B. stands by a certain set of principles which it tries to get the workers to accept and act upon. What is the alternative which the Communists and the Labour Party have both in their different ways followed? They say, in effect, "If we cannot get the workers to accept Socialism, then let us put up a programme which they will accept." So they have both put forward their long and frequently changed programmes of capitalist reforms. So little did the two parties' programmes differ, that for years the Communists and the Labour Party were found supporting the same candidates at elections, and the Communists will be voting Labour again just so soon as Moscow in its tricky stupidity orders them or permits them to do so.

And what has come of it? For the

Labour Party leaders the reward has been the plums of office. For the Communists there has been no reward whatever. They are more ineffective, more despised, more unpopular and more ridiculous than at any time in their history.

As regards industrial disputes, the Communist Party, as a party, is just as much a mere propaganda body as we are. It controls no single Trade Union. There is no important Union in which its members are a majority or even influential. The chief difference between the Communists and ourselves is that the Communists pretend to believe that the issuing of a "call to action" to the few thousand readers of its daily paper, a call which they are completely impotent to respond to, is "action," whereas it is in fact not only mere words, but words which are misleading and are intended to be misleading. The S.P.G.B., being an independent and democratic party, has no need, or wish to carry on deception for the purpose of getting money from the Russian Government.

The Acting Editor of the *Labour Monthly* criticises us because we cut ourselves off from every other party. This refers, presumably, to the Communist Party's former electoral allies, the Labour Party. Since when, we would like to know, has a willingness to co-operate with a party of capitalism been the hall-mark of a Socialist party?

IS THIS WORKING-CLASS EDUCATION?

In his "Portrait of Oxford," Mr. J. G. Sinclair has the following sidelight on Ruskin College, where working-class students acquire "culture" and learn how to climb out of the ranks of their class:—

A week or two after their arrival the working class students are indistinguishable in appearance from the conventional undergraduate. . . .

As soon as a RUSKIN COLLEGE student "feels the atmosphere" he discards his colliery trousers, or, as the case may be, his porter's cap. He is no longer a working man. He is "up at Oxford." As quickly as possible he gets into a pair of flannel trousers; walks the "Corn" bareheaded; and shapes his tongue with all available speed to the twang of the 'Varsity. He receives invitations from rich ladies, and influential hosts, to tea, to talk over "the condition of the working classes." If he is clever, the dons know how to flatter him. His ambitions are greatly encouraged. And he soon learns how to balance

the two sides of every question in good Balfourian style!

The RUSKIN COLLEGE student sees the 'eights which "Jimmy" Thomas and Frank Hodges have so successfully scaled. (Do not lives of Great Men all remind us, we can make our lives sublime!) No more colliery trousers; no more porters' caps. It is personal, rather than communal, uplift that RUSKIN COLLEGE student seeks now.

THE LAND WORKERS' "LIVING WAGE."

Agricultural workers are supposed by law to be entitled to the minimum wage fixed by the Wages Committees. The Labour Government introduced the Act in 1924, and since coming into office for the second time has appointed more inspectors to enforce it and to inquire into cases of non-payment of the minimum. Like all such reforms, the Act cannot alter the conditions which determine the workers' position in the capitalist system. Low as the minimum wages are, thousands of workers dare not ask for them, for fear of losing their jobs and their cottages. According to *Reynolds's Illustrated News* (April 12th, 1931), in 1930, 4,523 farms were inspected, as a result of which there were 1,630 claims for arrears of wages. *Reynolds's Agricultural Correspondent* estimates that "one farmer in four throughout the country is violating the law." This estimate is based on official inspections over a number of years in every part of the country.

When it is remembered that the minimum rates are so low that a large number of agricultural workers would have received as much, or more, had there been no Wages Act, the small value of such reforms is obvious. In Scotland the land workers' union refused the "benefits" of such regulation of wages. They preferred to depend upon ordinary Trade Union bargaining.

SIR JOSIAH STAMP ON WAGES.

Sir Josiah Stamp, who constantly advises lower wages as a means of improving trade (and, incidentally, the employers' profits), and who is paid many thousands of pounds a year by his employers, the L.M.S. Railway, for so doing, says, in his book, "Criticism and Other Addresses" (Ernest Benn, 15s.):—

You cannot permanently have the unsheltered engineer, receiving 50s. per week, riding from

work in a tram-car, at the front of which his less skilled colleague, as driver, works less hard for £4.

Sir Josiah Stamp does not explain how lowering tramwaymen's wages will help the engineer, nor does he explain why you must permanently have an investing class living on its investments without the need to work at all. And what are his thoughts when he rides behind an engine-driver on the L.M.S. Railway who receives as wages perhaps one-twentieth of the amount paid to Stamp?

Sir Josiah Stamp cannot even claim that as an economist he is efficient. As Mr. J. H. Thomas feelingly pointed out recently, Stamp failed to foresee the present depression. Had he done so, Mr. Thomas might not have so lightheartedly taken on the job of tackling unemployment, and might thus have saved his reputation.

WHY THE RAILWAYMEN ARE APATHETIC.

Mr. C. T. Cramp, General Secretary of the National Union of Railwaymen, stated recently in the *Railway Review* (quoted in *The Times*, April 9th) that the railwaymen are apathetic about nationalisation of the railways. Why should they be otherwise than apathetic? Did not Mr. Cramp, when giving evidence in favour of nationalisation before the Royal Commission on Transport, reply to the question, "Would nationalisation of the railways lead to higher wages?" with "Certainly not"? (see *Daily Telegraph*, January 17th, 1929). Taking all things into consideration, the position of the workers is just as unfavourable in State concerns as in private ones. The pay of Government employees is consciously based on rates of pay outside, and Mr. Snowden recently told the Civil Service that they ought not to expect their pay to be kept up, in view of the low pay of miners and others. The pay of Underground railwaymen has, in fact, recently been quoted by Post Office workers, before the Civil Service Commission, as an instance of higher levels of pay in a comparable private company.

For the employers, nationalisation has certain attractions, especially at a time when the future course of railway profits is obscure owing to the competition of road transport. So we learn from the

Parliamentary Correspondent of the *Daily Express* that "powerful support for nationalisation will come from the owners' side, though two of the groups are said to be unconvinced and hostile" (*Daily Express*, May 20th).

Of course, the rigging up of nominal opposition to a scheme of nationalisation has often been used with great success as a means of getting better terms.

The Government are now considering the advisability of electrifying the main line railways, as recommended in the Report of the Weir Committee. Railwaymen will be interested to learn that the Committee estimate securing great savings in running costs, including a saving of £10 millions a year on the wages of drivers and other train staffs. H.

S.P.G.B. PROPAGANDA MEETINGS

LONDON DISTRICT.

- Sunday** ... Tottenham, West Green Corner, 11.30 a.m.
Victoria Park, 11.30 a.m. and 4 p.m.
Walworth, Liverpool Street, 11.30 a.m.
Finsbury Park, 4 p.m.
Clapham Common, 6 p.m.
Cock Hotel, East Ham, 7.30 p.m.
Prince of Wales, Harrow Road, 11.30 a.m. and 7.30 p.m.
Battersea, Princes Head, 11 a.m.
- Monday** ... Ridley Road, Dalston, E.8., 8 p.m.
- Wednesday** ... The Fountain, Forest Gate Station, 8 p.m.
Prince of Wales, Paddington, 8 p.m.
Stepney Green, E., 8 p.m.
- Thursday** ... Tottenham Road, Dalston, E.8., 8 p.m.
Prince of Wales, Harrow Road, 8 p.m.
- Friday** ... Mossbury Road, Battersea, S.W., 8 p.m.
Prince of Wales, Paddington, 8 p.m.
- Saturday** ... Jolly Butchers Hill, Wood Green, 8 p.m.

GLASGOW DISTRICT

- Sunday** ... West Regent Street, 8 p.m.
- Monday** ... Vulcan Street, Springburn, 8 p.m.
- Wednesday** ... Abbey Close, Paisley Cross, 8 p.m.
- Thursday** ... Raeberry Street, Maryhill, 8 p.m.

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(If required only for 6 months, send 1/3).

BRANCH DIRECTORY.

- BATTERSEA**.—Sec., W. A. Devine, 2 Hanbury-rd., S.W.11. Branch meets Thursday, 8.30 p.m. at The Waiting Room, Latchmere Baths, entrance in Burns-road. Discussion second Thurs. in month.
- BECONTREE**.—Sec., Hy. Gratton, 4, Drummond Ave., Brooklands, Romford. Branch meets 1st and 3rd Wednesdays at 7.30, at above address.
- BIRMINGHAM**.—Sec., E. Jesper, 32, Rollason-rd., Erdington. Branch meets The Continental Cafe, Moor St., 1st and 3rd Sundays at 11 a.m.
- CENTRAL**.—Membership obtained only through the Ex. Committee. Applications to General Sec.
- EAST LONDON**.—Sec. W. Reynolds, 57, Weymouth Terrace, Hackney Rd. Branch meets every Thursday, at 7.30 p.m., at Limehouse Library (Committee Room), Commercial Road, E. Lectures on alternate Thursdays. Public invited.
- GLASGOW**.—Branch meets 2nd and 4th Fridays in month 8 p.m., at 118, Henderson Street, Glasgow, S.1. Sec., A. Shaw.
- HACKNEY**.—Branch meets Arcadian Cafe, 42, Amherst Road, Hackney, 1st and 3rd Fridays in month, 8 p.m., Discussions 9.30. Communication to Sec. at 21 Bridge Street, Homerton, E. 9.
- HULL**.—Branch meets 1st and 3rd Wednesdays in month at 15, Grosvenor Street, Beverley Road. Communications to M. V. Coupland at above address.
- ISLINGTON**.—All communications to N. A. Bishop, 39, Poyning's Road, Highgate, N.19.
- LEYTON**.—Communications to Sec., 8 Cheltenham Road, E.10.
- MANCHESTER**.—Sec., D. White, 91, Rochdale Road, Middleton. Branch meets 2nd and 4th Mondays in month at 8.15 p.m., at Room 2, 183, Oxford Road, All Saints.
- PADDINGTON**.—Branch meeting held on alternate Wednesdays, 8 p.m., at 430 Harrow Road, W.9.
- SHEFFIELD**.—Branch meets 2nd and 4th Wednesdays 7.30 p.m., Room 5, Trades Hall, Charles Street. Public discussion after business. Secretary E. Boden, 74, Glenalmond Road.
- SOUTHEND-ON-SEA**.—Sec., J. Bird, 5, Wellington-avenue, Westcliffe-on-Sea.
- SOUTH WARK**.—Branch meets Fridays at 8 p.m., 42, Great Dover Street, S.E.1. Communications to Sec., at above address.
- TOOTING**.—Branch meets on the 2nd and 4th Thursday in the month at the Tooting Adult School, 971, Garratt Lane, S.W.17. Sec. (pro-tem), H. E. Hutchins, 174, Haydon's Road, South Wimbledon, S.W. 19.
- TOTTENHAM**.—Secretary, 18, Woodlands Park Rd., N.15. Branch meets 1st and 3rd Fridays each month, Room 2, Trades Hall, 7, Bruce Grove, Discussion after branch business. Public invited.
- WALTHAMSTOW**.—Sec. S. E. Williams, 64, Bloxhall-rd., Leyton, E.10. Branch meets at Workmen's Hall, High-st., 2nd and 4th Mondays each month.
- WATFORD**.—A. Lawson, Sec., 107, Kensington-avenue, Watford. Branch meets Mondays at 8.30 p.m. at Secretary's address.
- WEST HAM**.—Branch meets Thursdays at 8 p.m. at 167, Romford-rd., Stratford. Sec., P. Hallard, 22, Colegrave-rd., Stratford, E.

WOOD GREEN.—All communications to Sec., F. W. Godfrey, 28, Russell Road, Palmers Green, N. 13. Branch meets 2nd and 4th Wednesday in month at 8.30 p.m. at Stirling House, Stuart Crescent.

THE SOCIALIST PARTY OF GREAT BRITAIN.

OBJECT.—The establishment of a system of society based upon the common ownership and democratic control of the means and instruments for producing and distributing wealth by and in the interests of the whole community.

DECLARATION OF PRINCIPLES.

THE SOCIALIST PARTY of Great HOLDS— Britain

That society as at present constituted is based upon the ownership of the means of living (i.e., lands, factories, railways, etc.) by the capitalist or master class, and the consequent enslavement of the working class by whose labour alone wealth is produced.

That in society, therefore, there is an antagonism of interests, manifesting itself as a class struggle, between those who possess but do not produce and those who produce but do not possess.

That this antagonism can be abolished only by the emancipation of the working class from the domination of the master class, by the conversion into the common property of society of the means of production and distribution, and their democratic control by the whole people.

That as in the order of social evolution the working class is the last class to achieve its freedom, the emancipation of the working class will involve the emancipation of all mankind, without distinction of race or sex.

That this emancipation must be the work of the working class itself.

That as the machinery of government, including the armed forces of the nation, exists only to conserve the monopoly by the capitalist class of the wealth taken from the workers, the working class must organise consciously and politically for the conquest of the powers of government, national and local, in order that this machinery, including these forces, may be converted from an instrument of oppression into the agent of emancipation and the overthrow of privilege, aristocratic and plutocratic.

That as political parties are but the expression of class interests, and as the interest of the working class is diametrically opposed to the interests of all sections of the master class, the party seeking working-class emancipation must be hostile to every other party.

THE SOCIALIST PARTY of Great Britain, therefore, enters the field of political action determined to wage war against all other political parties, whether alleged labour or avowedly capitalist, and calls upon the members of the working class of this country to muster under its banner to the end that a speedy termination may be wrought to the system which deprives them of the fruits of their labour, and that poverty may give place to comfort, privilege to equality, and slavery to freedom.

Those agreeing with the above principles and desiring enrolment in the Party should apply for membership form to secretary of nearest branch or at Head Office.

THE Socialist Standard

The Official Organ of **THE SOCIALIST PARTY** of Great Britain.

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LONDON, AUGUST, 1931

[MONTHLY, TWOPENCE.]

THE SOCIALIST PARTY AND WAR

The threat of war casts a shadow over all who witnessed the last great conflict—civilians as well as combatants. Death and mutilation, the loss of health, the breaking up of homes and the frustration of hopes and plans; years of anguish while the war dragged on, and when it was over a heritage of sorrow which will last for the lives of millions of the present generation. Nearly nine million men killed, with refinements of cruelty unknown in pre-civilised times; 21 million wounded and hundreds of thousands of men and women suffering from permanently impaired health brought about by the aggravated want which war and blockade inflicted upon the working-class. To this appalling list must be added the lies, the hatreds, and the bestiality that are inseparable from modern warfare. In face of the cost there can be few who want war for its own sake. As Mr. Duff Cooper, now Conservative M.P. for the St. George's Division, has aptly said, "was anyone going to argue that an Englishman or any other human being liked sitting in a waterlogged trench with the prospect of being blown up by a gun fired miles away, and thinking that his home and family might be destroyed by bombs dropped from the sky? Bring him an Englishman who liked that, and he would endeavour to have him certified as insane and placed in a lunatic asylum."

But if, as is true, men and women of all parties hate war and are sincerely anxious to prevent it, why cannot we all get together for that purpose? What need can there be for a distinctly socialist attitude towards war? The answer is simple and final. The sincere desire for peace shown by the capitalist parties is nullified by their over-riding will to main-

tain the capitalist system of society. Did they not with equal sincerity talk peace and want peace before 1914? Did they not seek to justify that war by the most hollow of all claims—that it was a war to end war? And do they not now, with protestations of peace on their lips continue to build up still vaster and more destructive forces on land and sea and in the air? Mr. Hoover, President of the U.S.A., in his speech on Armistice Day, 1929, said:—

"The men under arms, including active reserves . . . are almost 30,000,000 in number, or nearly 10,000,000 more than before the Great War."

Mr. Lloyd George quoted and endorsed President Hoover's words in a speech in the House of Commons on December 4th, 1929 (see Parliamentary Report of that date), and then said:—

"The weapons of destruction . . . in number and in power, are five times more shattering than those which the whole of the armies had when they went into battle on 4th August, 1914."

The Socialist Party of Great Britain has nothing in common with the parties that preach peace but continue to prepare for war.

Our opponents defend their actions with talk of the need for security. We must, they say, guard the integrity and independence of the nation. They differ among themselves only as to the amount and kind of armaments necessary for security. They argue the respective merits and costs of the battleship, the submarine, aircraft and poison gas. There are some who urge that the nations should agree to gradual and mutual disarmament, and there are even pacifists who claim that the best of all guarantees of security is for this country to disarm completely without waiting for the rest of the world.

The Socialist Party does not agree with any of these points of view.

For us it is not a question of deciding which is the best method of achieving security, but a question of deciding whether the security referred to is of any real concern to the working class. We recognise that the capitalists have a real interest at stake. It is in the nature of the capitalist system to perpetuate conflict between the classes and between the nations.

Commercial rivalries set capitalist states and empires one against the other. The class which has property and privilege must maintain armed forces to protect their property and to make secure the social system which affords them their privilege. They need armed forces at home for use when occasion arises against striking workers; they need armed forces abroad to seize and to hold territories rich in raw materials, to protect merchant ships on distant trade routes, to guard vital links like the Suez and Panama canals, and to defend India, where they have £1,000 millions invested, and similar sources of profit. It is for this that armed forces are maintained and set in motion. In 1914 the German capitalist class sought to improve their commercial position by gaining control of ports on the Channel and by extending their colonial empire. The British capitalists saw that their interests were threatened and were prepared to sacrifice the lives of hundreds of thousands of men in order that the danger to British capitalism might be averted. The capitalists and their politicians do not consciously seek war as a means of snatching wealth and power from their rivals but they are driven by the forces at work in the capitalist system to follow policies which bring them into conflict with each other. The employing class in each country strives desperately to sell abroad the superabundant wealth that is surplus to the demands of the home market. The governments are called in to further the interests of the national groups of capitalists. First it is the influence of the trade departments exercised in the form of polite representations to foreign governments. But, ultimately, when commercial rivalry has provoked fierce hostility, there will be charges and counter-charges of "dumping," of unfair discrimination under the cover of taxes or laws, of infringements of "spheres of

influence," and various other resented practices that veil the economic war. Then, when the secret threats of the diplomatists fail to be of use, recourse is had to the armed forces, and war is declared. Under the cloak of patriotism and national defence, with the blessing of the church, the press, the labour leaders and the politicians, millions of workers are thrown against each other in battle. They do not know that they are fighting to defend or to extend the interests of the class that lives by robbing them of the fruits of their labour.

The answer that the Socialist Party gave in 1914 is the answer we shall give to all capitalist wars. What we said in our Manifesto in 1914 represents our views to-day. It is a document of historical interest and is reproduced below:—

THE WAR, AND THE SOCIALIST POSITION.

Whereas the capitalists of Europe have quarrelled over the question of the control of trade routes and the world's markets, and are endeavouring to exploit the political ignorance and blind passions of the working class of their respective countries in order to induce the said workers to take up arms in what is solely their masters' quarrel, and

Whereas further, the pseudo-Socialists and labour "leaders" of this country, in common with their fellows on the Continent, have again betrayed the working-class position, either through their ignorance of it, their cowardice, or worse, and are assisting the master class in utilising this thieves' quarrel to confuse the minds of the workers and turn their attention from the Class Struggle.

THE SOCIALIST PARTY of Great Britain seizes the opportunity of re-affirming the Socialist position, which is as follows:

That Society as at present constituted is based upon the ownership of the means of living by the capitalist or master class, and the consequent enslavement of the working class, by whose labour alone wealth is produced.

That in Society, therefore, there is an antagonism of interests, manifesting itself as a CLASS WAR, between those who possess but do not produce and those who produce but do not possess.

That the machinery of government, including the armed forces of the nation, exist only to conserve the monopoly by the capitalist class of the wealth taken from the workers.

These armed forces, therefore, will only be set in motion to further the interests of the class who control them—the master class—and as the workers' interests are not bound up in the struggle for markets wherein their masters may dispose of the wealth they have stolen from them (the workers), but in the struggle to end the system under which they are robbed, they are not concerned with the present European struggle, which is already known as the "BUSINESS" war,

for it is their masters' interests which are involved, and not their own.

THE SOCIALIST PARTY of Great Britain, pledges itself to keep the issue clear by expounding the CLASS STRUGGLE, and whilst placing on record its abhorrence of this latest manifestation of the callous, sordid, and mercenary nature of the international capitalist class, and declaring that no interests are at stake justifying the shedding of a single drop of working-class blood, enters its emphatic protest against the brutal and bloody butchery of our brothers of this and other lands who are being used as food for cannon abroad while suffering and starvation are the lot of their fellows at home.

Having no quarrel with the working class of any country, we extend to our fellow-workers of all lands the expression of our goodwill and Socialist fraternity, and pledge ourselves to work for the overthrow of capitalism and the triumph of Socialism.

THE WORLD FOR THE WORKERS! THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE.

August 25th, 1914.

Wage Workers of the World Unite! You have nothing to lose but your chains, you have a world to win!—*Marx*.

The consequences of the war have fully justified our attitude of opposition to it. The nations which waged war in 1914 were all of them capitalist nations. The Allied group used their victory to further the interests of their capitalists by seizing colonial and other profitable territories that had belonged to the ruling class in the defeated countries, and by imposing heavy financial burdens under the name of reparations. What difference has this made to the working class? Capitalism remains as secure in 1931 as it was in 1914. The working class are still a subject class. Their economic position in the victorious countries is no better than before, and in the defeated countries no worse. In England and in Germany the workers' standard of living is practically at the same level as in 1914. Prices are higher, but wages have increased roughly in the same proportion. It is the German capitalists who have had to pay the reparations out of their profits. The average rate of profit in Germany is now appreciably less than in Great Britain. Germany's millionaire class almost disappeared as a result of the war. Victory meant victory for the British, French and American propertied class. Defeat meant defeat for the German propertied class.

For the working class in all countries every death, every wound and every hour of suffering was in vain. The war solved

no working class problems, and from a working class point of view, was a crime.

Let us now compare the attitude of the Socialist Party with the attitude and actions of other parties whose claim it is that they are concerned particularly with the welfare of the workers. Little need be said of the Liberal and Tory parties. They are admittedly prepared to go to war and admittedly uphold capitalism which is the cause of war in the modern world.

But what of the Labour Party?

In the opening month of the war we were told that:

"The Head Office of the Party, its entire machinery are to be placed at the disposal of the Government in their recruiting campaign."—("Labour Leader," September 3rd, 1914.)

Three years later the position remained unchanged. Mr. W. F. Purdy, Chairman of the Labour Party Executive, in an interview with a correspondent of the "Manchester Guardian" (7th June, 1917), said:

"As Chairman of the E.C. of the Labour Party I am not going to meet or sit in conference with the representatives of the enemy countries while we are at war. I mean to carry out the policy of British Labour as laid down by our representative gathering. That policy is to pursue the war to a successful termination, which means to a complete victory over the enemy."

One prominent member of the Labour Party, Mr. Arthur Henderson, M.P., took an active part in recruiting and was given a post in the cabinet when the Labour Party joined in the war-time coalition government. It was Mr. Henderson who in 1916 urged that the strike leaders be deported from the Clyde area.

The Independent Labour Party in 1914 allowed its members to support the war and engage in recruiting. Mr. J. R. MacDonald and the late J. Keir Hardie both took part in the recruiting campaign, although at the same time criticising the past conduct and policy of the Liberal government which was responsible for the entry of this country into the war. I.L.P. members in Parliament were permitted to vote war credits, and throughout the war the I.L.P. remained a constituent part of the Labour Party.

It is important to remember that these organisations have not abandoned the beliefs which in 1914 led them to support the war. At the 1925 Labour Party Conference Mr. Arthur Henderson, on behalf of the Executive Committee, opposed a

resolution pressing for disarmament. He said:

"If France continued in the frame of mind she was now in, had they to overlook the possibilities of defence? They could not afford to ignore this question of defence."—(Report of Proceedings. Page 232.)

In 1924 and again in 1930 and 1931, the Labour Government continued to maintain and even in some cases to increase the strength of the armaments of this country.

The Labour Government is still prepared in certain eventualities to wage war in defence of British capitalism; if not against the German enemy of 1914, then against Mr. Henderson's French enemies of 1925, or some other enemies of the future.

It must not be forgotten that in each of the two Labour Governments a considerable number of Ministers as well as a clear majority of the Labour Party M.P.'s were members of the I.L.P. so that the latter body cannot escape responsibility for all that has been done in respect of the maintenance of armaments.

We would place on record the words of Mr. Arthur Henderson, uttered in reply to the charge that he supported the war. Mr. Henderson said ("Daily Herald," 10th January, 1929) that "he was not in the least ashamed of his war record."

The Socialist Party of Great Britain is also not ashamed of its war record. But we can add, as Mr. Henderson cannot, that our attitude then and now is in line with the interests of the working class.

H.

THE SOCIALIST PARTY OF AUSTRALIA.

Readers in Australia are invited to communicate with the Socialist Party of Australia at Box 1440, P.O., Elizabeth St., Melbourne

THE WORKERS' SOCIALIST PARTY (U.S.A.).

Readers in the U.S.A. are invited to communicate with the Workers' Socialist Party of the United States, at 132, East 23rd Street, New York City (Room 7).

The Workers' Socialist Party are our agents in the U.S.A., and the "SOCIALIST STANDARD" is obtainable from them at the above address.

THE SOCIALIST FORUM.

THE VALUE OF EMOTIONAL APPEALS.

The correspondent whose letter was replied to last month, writes again on the need to make an "emotional appeal."

The Editor, Tottenham, N.17,
"Socialist Standard," July 7th, 1931.
42, Great Dover Street,
London, S.E.1.

Dear Sir,

(1) May I reply to the points raised against my letter in the July issue. The success of the emotional appeal of the war reveals how powerful appeals to irrational forces can be. The workers do not simply commit an error of judgment, mistaking "the capitalists' interests for their own," but respond because their behaviour is so largely influenced by emotional tendencies, which, suppressed by the demands of civilised life, find outlets in behaviour often irrational when judged from an economic standpoint.

(2) The Socialist case may be rejected or fail to arouse interest because the dominant trends in a person do not respond sympathetically to the exposition. Trivialities such as the manne, speech, or clothes of the propagandist may evoke unfavourable impressions, or the immediate attraction of a tennis game or dance distort the value of the propaganda.

Influences which seem remote from politics play a part in the making of Socialists. As mentioned in my letter, "experiences of a sexual character, dislike of certain individuals, jealousy, etc., find consolation in Socialism," supplying motives other than a sense of inferiority.

(3) It is noteworthy that, while Christian, Communist, and Socialist vigorously assert the intellectual character of their convictions, it is not difficult for each to discover emotional influences at play in the others.

(4) Modern psychology, distinguished by its emphasis on a dynamic or hormic view of the mind, is reversing the conceit that man, among animals, is a rational creature. In the nineteenth century, when Darwin established the truth of evolution, those whose approach to people depended on the retention of an obsolete account of man's origin, resisted the theory strenuously. Now, a like opposition is offered to the psychologists' conviction that the intellectualist interpretation of man's behaviour is equally outworn.

Just as evolution is older than Darwin, so there may be much that is not new in modern psychological theory, but it is through the mass of evidence collected that theories gain weight and insist on scientific recognition.

(5) The tendencies within capitalism seem to point to a drift towards Socialism, but they, after all, are tendencies only, to be worked out by human-beings. There is no divinity benevolently directing events to a happy ending, and so if Socialists persist in presenting their propaganda to a mythical working-man, guided by intellectual preference, and, with a fine disdain, refuse to stoop to moulding their propaganda nearer the hearts of the workers, their efforts may be mis-spent.

Yours faithfully, R. HOBSBAUM.

REPLY.

(1) Our correspondent now claims that the workers' support of the war proves "how powerful appeals to irrational forces can be," and he denies that they responded to an appeal to their "interests." Does our correspondent then deny that the workers in 1914 were trapped by being told that defeat would mean the loss of "their" colonies, "their" foreign trade, "their" merchant shipping, "their" property, "their" liberties, "their" jobs, and "their" security, not to mention their lives and those of their dependants? If these are not appeals to the workers' interests what are they? Even the talk about "poor little Belgium" was backed up with the threat that defeat would mean the same treatment for this country as had been meted out across the Channel.

If the workers respond merely to "emotional tendencies," not guided by assumptions as to their interests, why do not the workers endeavour to treat their class enemies at home as they treated the Germans when they (the workers) believed their interests to be bound up with the outcome of the war? What sort of "emotional tendency" is it that leads the half-starved and unemployed dweller in a slum to vote for the class (and even for the individuals) responsible for his miseries, makes him leave the place where the miseries are inflicted and could be ended, and actually lay down his life on foreign soil under the orders and in the interests of that class? If the uncontrolled "emotional tendency" dominates the situation why did not and do not the victims make a direct attack on the landlords, employers, and politicians with whose activities their miseries are closely and obviously associated?

The answer is that the workers are always having it drummed into them that they have a common interest with the capitalist class in maintaining capitalism.

Our correspondent, as was pointed out last month, ignores the results of 40 years of I.L.P. and Labour Party appeals to emotion. He persists in ignoring the results, except to make the claim that the war shows how powerful the emotional appeal can be. In his anxiety to seize a supposed point Mr. Hobsbaum appears to have forgotten what we are discussing. His admission that years of emotional appeal from the Labour Party and I.L.P.

did not succeed in making socialists but did succeed in making willing victims for the slaughter only supports our objection to the emotional appeal as a means of making socialists.

(2) The remarks in this paragraph are obvious but not in the least helpful. Of course socialist propaganda will be listened to more readily if it is pleasantly and tellingly presented; but so will anti-socialist propaganda. Does our correspondent imagine that Liberals are all of them people who think that Lloyd George has a nice kind face? And that the workers are all childish like H. G. Wells and will, like him, allow their dislike for Marx's Victorian whiskers to dissuade them from studying socialism?

(3) It is difficult to make out what this paragraph is intended to imply, as it seems to have little to do with the argument. Our correspondent lumps together Christian, Communist and Socialist and says that he finds "emotional influences" in us all. It would indeed be strange if he did not. If he looks a little closer he will discover that we are actually human beings. But what has that to do with our contention that emotional appeals are not a method of building up a socialist organisation, and with his contention that emotional appeals are such a method?

(4) Again, we must ask our correspondent to consider the facts and not just discuss airy assumptions. "Modern psychology," he tells us, has shown that the emotional appeal is the way to build up a socialist party. Will he then explain why the I.L.P., which concentrated on this emotional appeal, from its formation back in the eighteen nineties, has failed so utterly to get socialism, or to build a socialist organisation, or even to build a solid and dependable organisation at all? Why, in face of emotional appeals backed up with lavish funds and delivered by professors at the game such as J. Maxton, why, in face of that has the I.L.P. lost half its members in two or three years?

(5) In this paragraph our correspondent (who, by the way, writes in language which the average reader would find it very difficult to understand) tells us how to get to the hearts of the workers and thus not waste our efforts. We can only reply that if we had had the relatively enormous financial resources of the

emotional appealers the I.L.P. and the Communist Party, and yet found our efforts had produced as little result as theirs have done, we would indeed have cause to look for different methods. But the facts point to the reverse conclusion. Apart from confusing the workers' minds and making our propaganda efforts more difficult, the emotional appealers have achieved nothing of assistance in the task of getting socialism.

ED., COMM.

A NEW READER ASKS SOME QUESTIONS.

A correspondent who is evidently not acquainted with the Socialist Party asks a number of questions on a variety of subjects. The answers may be of use to other new readers who have yet to learn where we stand.

Legion of Unemployed,
54, Poole Road,
Coventry.
July 16th, 1931.

Editor,
"Socialist Standard."

Dear Sir,

- (1) What is your policy with regard to finance?
- (2) Assuming the S.P.G.B. got a majority in the House, how would they proceed to nationalise the means of production?
- (3) Do you think that the centre of control of economic power is vested in Parliament, or with the Bank of England?
- (4) Assuming a Socialist Government nationalised the means of production, how will they guarantee it will function, and how do you intend to distribute amongst the people, claims on the proceeds of production in the form of consumable goods and services, besides wages for labour?
- (5) As a policy, don't you think issuing *claims on production* by the Government to the people, is better technique in achieving Socialism than that of owning *means of production*?

Yours faithfully,
GEORGE HICKLING.

REPLY.

(1) Questions of finance are questions of capitalism. Under capitalism the means of production and the products are the private property of the capitalist class. Money serves the purpose (among others) of enabling workers and capitalists to realise in a convenient form their respective shares of the products which the workers produce and the capitalists own; the workers' share being their wages based on their cost of living. A money system is neither necessary nor possible under socialism. The means of production and the products will no longer be privately

owned. The workers will not be in the position of selling their labour-power to a propertied class, and goods will not be the object of buying and selling transactions because buying and selling are only conceivable between private owners. Money will have lost its purpose and there will be no financial questions.

We are not concerned with the financial problems that arise under capitalism between the different sections of the capitalist class, although these questions greatly exercise the so-called "Labour" organisations. They conceive it to be their duty or their interest to try to teach the capitalists how best to run capitalism, whereas we are concerned with pointing out to the workers how to get socialism.

(2) Our correspondent is completely in error when he accuses us of wanting to "nationalise the means of production." We want to do nothing of the kind. Nationalisation or state capitalism is an arrangement by which the capitalists exploit the working class through the Government instead of through private companies. Under nationalisation the capitalists receive their property-incomes as before and remain the owners of the means of production. The difference consists in the holding of Government securities instead of company shares. It often means the replacement of a varying rate of interest by a fixed rate. The change is in the interests of some of the capitalists. It is not in the interest of the working class. The Socialist Party has always opposed nationalisation.

What socialism consists of is the removal of the capitalist class from their privileged positions as owners and controllers of the means of production and distribution. The change is a simple one. When a majority of the workers are socialist and are organised in the Socialist Party, they will gain control of the machinery of Government. By so doing they will have taken away from the capitalist class their only means of retaining their hold over the means of production, &c. Their political power taken from them, the capitalists will then just cease to be a propertied class.

(3) Our correspondent asks us if we think that "economic power" is vested in Parliament or the Bank of England. It is a pity he did not try to explain what

"economic power" is. If our correspondent means the power of the capitalist to own and control his factories, land, workshops, &c., and only to permit these things to be used by the workers when and on such conditions as he thinks fit, then that power is based on the laws of property and the armed forces which enforce those laws. That power is centred in Parliament and the rest of the political machinery, because it is Parliament which makes those laws and Parliament which maintains and controls the other political machinery and those armed forces. The Bank of England, like other private business concerns, exists and operates only by virtue of Acts of Parliament. It has no "power" and indeed no existence except that which Parliament permits. This fact is obscured by the circumstance that usually the capitalists in control of Parliament and the capitalists in control of the Bank of England either belong to the same group or see eye to eye because they have identical interests.

(4) This question starts off with a mistaken assumption about nationalisation which is dealt with in (2) above.

The question contains several other serious misconceptions. First of all it is a wrong conception that socialism is going to be introduced by a Socialist Government acting as an entity separate and apart from the people and managing their affairs for them. There will be no socialism until a majority understand socialism and organise to get it. They will decide what they want done and how they want it done. Once political power has been obtained, they, the majority, will decide how the proceeds of production are to be distributed among the members of society. Apart from the early period when there may be an insufficiency of certain kinds of goods (a heritage from capitalism) goods will be freely accessible to the members of society.

There will be no private ownership of the means of life, hence no relationship of employers and employed and no buying and selling of labour-power. In other words, there will be no wages because there will be no system of wage-labour.

(5) Our correspondent here asks us to abandon common ownership of the means of production and to adopt another means of "achieving socialism." But socialism is a system of society based upon common

ownership. Therefore our correspondent's scheme of social organisation is not socialism, whatever else it may be.

As he rejects common ownership the only alternative is private ownership, and this indeed is evidently what he has in mind, since he writes of—"the Government" issuing claims to the products of industry "to the people." It would not be socialism but state capitalism, under which the owning class would own and control the means of production and issue "claims on production" to the working class. State capitalism, as seen in the Post Office and in the Russian state industries, may be a good thing for the capitalists, but it solves no important working-class problem.

ED., COMM.

ANSWERS TO CORRESPONDENTS.

Replies to the following correspondents have been crowded out of this issue, and will appear in the next issue. Mr. Dowdell (Oxford), Mr. Manning (Wealdstone), and Mr. Berman.

MOVEMENTS ABROAD.

AUSTRALIA.

Our companion party, the Socialist Party of Australia, reports very successful propaganda meetings in Melbourne. During May two debates were held, one with a free-lance Communist on the existence of capitalism in Russia, and the other with a Single-Taxer. The two halls were filled to overflowing. A large and interested audience attended at their platform on the Public Forum on May Day.

The S.P. of A. are trying to get larger premises to cope with their growing activities.

NEW ZEALAND.

We learn with interest that supporters of the S.P.G.B. in Wellington, New Zealand, got together early in the year and formed the Socialist Party of New Zealand. After holding public meetings for some weeks these had to be suspended for the time being. The result of the efforts of these comrades has been shown in a considerable demand for our literature. Efforts are now being made to organise study classes and speakers' classes in Wellington and Auckland.

OFFICIAL NOTICE.

All communications for the Executive Committee, Subscriptions for the SOCIALIST STANDARD, Articles, and Correspondence submitted for insertion therein, should be addressed—The Socialist Party of Great Britain, 42, Great Dover Street, London, S.E.1, to whom Money Orders should be made payable.

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The Socialist Standard,

AUGUST,



1931

The German Crisis.

The present situation in Germany, and the international financial crisis springing from it, brings into clear light some of the contradictions bound up with the capitalist system of production.

Germany was defeated in the war and the victors hastened to collect the fruits of victory, but there were a host of obstacles in the way. The fruits could only be obtained from the surplus value (unpaid labour) wrung from the German workmen. In order that German workmen should be able to labour German industries must flourish. This fact, and the international nature of capitalist investments and banking operations, along with the international complications of buyers and sellers, frustrated any attempt to ruin German national capitalists. The victors dared not kill the goose that they hoped would lay the golden eggs. Germany was like the debtor with "expectations" who had to be kept alive and well.

Since the war German industries have developed and German industrial competition has been keenly felt in all direction. When attempts have been made to curb their industrial aspirations or press for reparation settlements they just pointed to probable ruin as the result. Their plan of campaign has been aided by the mutual distrust and jealousy of the erstwhile allied

nations. France, in particular, whose position looked to be most promising, has constantly felt the pressure of its allies in thwarting its industrial designs.

Although France has undergone a rapid and thorough industrial revolution in recent years, the progress of its industrial magnates is hindered by the intrigues and jealous activities of their rivals in other nations who have suddenly discovered an altruistic interest in Germany's welfare. These other nations frequently call upon France to make concessions to Germany and foster the idea that France is the thorn in the rosebud. In the meantime, German capitalists pile up their fortunes and their debts, grin, and groan about the burden of the peace terms—which deprives them of a portion of the fruits of the German workman's labour.

In particular, the growing gold reserve of France has been the subject of much feeling to outside capitalists. The present German crisis has been seized upon at once to try to induce France to disgorge some of it. The "News Chronicle" for July 14th in an editorial article under the heading "France's great opportunity," puts the matter bluntly as follows:

The world is face to face to-day with an economic situation more sinister than any with which it has ever been confronted. Unless from some source credit and confidence can be promptly restored in Germany, Germany will collapse.

The situation thus created places France in a position which is really decisive. On the one hand she is the only European nation which possesses the financial resources necessary to meet the case, and, on the other hand, she alone can create the atmosphere of goodwill and confidence, without which no outside financial help is likely to be forthcoming.

Conferences of international financial advisers and political "heads" have been held and, at the moment of writing, France appears to have been induced to do her share in backing a loan.

The "Sunday Express" for July 19th printed a long article setting forth the financial details of the situation, from which the following points are taken:—

Germany owes America £650 millions; America also has £300 millions invested in German industrial securities and real estate.

Germany owes England £150 millions, and about £100 millions to France, Switzerland, Holland and Sweden, but not much of it to France.

Included in the above totals is £300 millions of short term loans to Germany

repayable in October. It is this money that has caused the crisis as Germany is unable to find it.

£150 millions of this short term money is due to America and £100 millions to England.

France's interest in the above is negligible. On the other hand she has a large amount on short term loans in Roumania, Hungary and Poland—which goes if Germany collapses. Apart from this, France's main interest is in the £50 millions reparations money guaranteed annually under the reparations agreement. The fall of the German government, which seems certain if they either accept conditions for a loan or fail to surmount the crisis, will probably ruin English and American merchant banking houses and compel France to say good-bye to the £50 millions a year.

The "Daily Express" article contains one statement to which we must call attention, although it is really outside the subject of this article. There has been an almost unanimous moan about the shortness of money in this country, and an attempt to trace industrial troubles to this source. It is therefore useful to note the following from the above mentioned article:

"Meanwhile," what about Great Britain? She is in a good position. If it were necessary for her to meet her foreign obligations we could mobilise from all sources—we could send out of the country—as much as £100,000,000 in gold, without disturbing the necessary cover for the note issue of the Bank of England."

The real crisis in Germany, however, is political rather than financial. It is a fight for life on the part of the coalition Government parties. The Hitler Party and the Communists repudiate the reparation terms and seek to blame reparations for the present situation, and with them the Government and also the Social Democrats, whose votes have more than once saved the Government from defeat. These parties are on the horns of a dilemma. If they repudiate the reparations agreement and Germany crashes, they will go down too. If they stand by the terms of it Hitler and his group (now the second largest party in Germany, the Social Democrats being the largest) will probably sweep into power. There is a third way out for them—to invite Hitler into a coalition Government, in which case they would all stand or fall together. At

the moment the interested parties outside of Germany are anxious that the coalition parties should retain control on account of the risk of debt repudiation in general.

At the moment the Social Democrats are using their votes to prevent the defeat of the Government. On the 17th July the Reich and State Governments were given power to confiscate or suppress at discretion any periodical in the country. They can compel any periodical to insert in the position, in the type, and with the headings they demand, and without any comment, any statement or declaration whatsoever. ("Sunday Times," July 19th.)

That such steps should be deemed necessary is an indication of how frail is the Government's hold upon power.

There is one lesson the last few days should make plain once again. Socialism cannot gradually arise in a capitalist world. The German S.D.P. has professed to be aiming at Socialism and believes it possible to introduce it gradually while still assisting in the administration of capitalism in association with capitalist parties. But the running of capitalism demands so much (quite apart from corruption and the like), and its financial operations are so complicated, that there is neither the time nor the means left to do other than make the machinery run smoothly. When the machine gets out of gear those at the head of affairs and all parties supporting them get their due—the antagonism of the masses.

The reparations question, and the financial crisis generally, is occupying the whole of the attention both of the German Social Democrats and of the British Labour Government. Mr. MacDonald told the London Conference on Monday, July 20th, what was the issue. He said ("Daily Herald," 21st July):—

Our position, therefore, in a word, is to restore the confidence of the foreign investor in Germany.

What a spectacle for laughter! The English and German Labour leaders struggling to avert the ruin of the bankers and to restore the confidence of the investing class in the stability of German capitalism!

HOW TO GET TO HEAD OFFICE.

Great Dover Street is a turning out of Borough High Street, near Borough (Underground) Station. The station is on the line from Morden to Hampstead and Highgate, and lies between the Bank Station and Elephant and Castle.

BRUTAL ATTACK ON A SPEAKER.

We learn from the "One Big Union Bulletin" (Winnipeg) that repeated brutal attacks have been made by Communists in that city on speakers of the newly re-formed Socialist Party of Canada.

We have recently experienced similar tactics in Glasgow, not, be it noted, from Communists, but—or so it is believed—from certain religious fanatics.

On Monday, June 29th, after a meeting at Clydebank our speaker, A. Shaw, was attacked by four individuals, one of whom finally knocked him unconscious with a piece of lead pipe. Comrade Shaw was badly shaken up by the assault, and it was some days before he fully recovered.

The gratifying feature is that listeners, whatever their political or religious views, do not usually sympathise with such methods, and further very successful meetings have been held at Clydebank.

We do not often have cause to complain of attempts to interfere with our meetings. Except at times of high feeling, such as the war years, when outdoor socialist meetings were often made impossible by the joint efforts of the authorities and the patriots, we find audiences ready to give us a hearing. Our great advantage over the other political parties is that we allow our opponents to state their case on our platform. Audiences, knowing this to be our practice, are less willing to tolerate obstructive methods from our opponents. If other political parties extended the same liberty to opponents they would have less trouble than they sometimes get.

There are, of course, exceptional cases. Those who deliberately set out to smash up meetings or to attack socialist speakers can contrive to seize opportunities for so doing. As explained by Mr. Harry Pollitt in the "Daily Worker" (29th January, 1930); it is the deliberate policy of the Communist Party to smash up its opponents' meetings by force. If that policy has not been attended by any success the explanation can no doubt be found in the smallness of the Communist Party membership, which makes it a very risky proceeding for the would-be smashers.

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A TRIBUTE FROM AN UNEXPECTED QUARTER.

The following passage is taken from an article, "Socialism as a Business Career," published in the "National Citizen," the organ of the National Citizen's Union.

A study of Labour-Socialism since the beginning of this century reveals some highly interesting circumstances. The movement has been, and is, many sided. It includes those who have clung throughout to the undiluted spirit of Marx as a cult or religion. Personal ambition, advertisement, the power and pelf of office, from the Parish Council to Parliament, has not deflected them from their principles or their preachings. When His Holiness the Pope announces that a good Christian cannot be a Socialist or a Socialist a good Christian, these people do not seek to "square the circle" with the terminological sophistry of "explanations" and "justifications" of the Labour-Socialist position. They boldly state: "Yes, it is true. Buy our booklet on 'Socialism and Religion'; and you will see that Socialism DOES mean Atheism." This type of Socialist remains exceedingly small in numbers, and the struggling existence of his organisation, the Socialist Party of Great Britain, is witness to the truth that Marxian Socialism, unalloyed with mixtures of graft, job-hunting, and political chicanery, makes no appeal to English democracy.—(July, 1931.)

The writer of the article, who signs himself "Life-long Trade Unionist," appreciates the way in which the Labour Party machine has been constructed—on a foundation of "graft, job-hunting and political chicanery," a foundation from which "cunning and even illiterate tub-thumpers" have risen to positions of relative wealth and eminence.

It is probable, however, that the Labour politicians do not feel any too secure in their eminence. There is always the danger for the Labour leaders that with growing knowledge the workers come to realise the rottenness of the foundation on which the Labour Party has been built. The ferocity with which the Labour M.P.'s have attacked their deserter, Sir Oswald Moseley, makes it look as if they feel very insecure indeed. We can assure the "National Citizen" that when unalloyed socialism does make headway among the workers it will produce a force far more formidable than the shoddy movement fashioned by the timid charlatans of the Labour Party. P. S.

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The Socialist Party v. The Communist Party.

A DEBATE.

About four hundred people were present at Chalmers Street, Clydebank, on Wednesday, May 27th, to hear a debate between the Communist Party of Great Britain and the S.P.G.B. The subject for debate was, "Which Policy should the working class support at the Present Period of Crisis, that of the C.P.G.B. or that of the S.P.G.B." Mr. J. Cunningham occupied the chair.

The Chairman intimated that the conditions of debate would be: first speech twenty minutes, second speech fifteen minutes, and a closing speech of five minutes. All "personalities" barred.

A. Shaw, on behalf of the S.P.G.B., opened the debate by defining terms. By working class was meant those who had to sell their labour-power to the capitalist class in order to live. By capitalist class was meant those who bought the labour-power of the workers. Capital was that portion of wealth used with a view to profit. The working class desired to sell their labour power at as high a figure as they could possibly obtain, while the capitalist endeavoured to purchase as low as possible. The private ownership of the means of living provided the basis for a struggle which Socialists termed the class struggle.

The class struggle had two aspects—economic and political. Workers form organisations on the economic field (Trade Unions) in order to make organised resistance to capitalist attacks on wages and working conditions, but in spite of all efforts put forth by them on this field their conditions tend to become worse. The class struggle would go on so long as the capitalist system of society existed.

Under such conditions the workers are doomed to a life of poverty, degradation and misery. The means of production are developed to such an extent at the present time, that all kinds of goods could be produced almost as plentifully as water. Yet we had the absurd state of affairs of workers starving in the midst of plenty. In America, in the State of Ohio, wheat was being burned in order to keep up prices. Around us the factories and granaries were bursting with the necessities of life while the producers went ill-clad,

ill-nourished and ill-housed. This being the state of affairs, workers organised on the political field in order to better their conditions. Lacking knowledge of the cause of their terrible plight, the workers fell easy victims to smooth-tongued orators who enlisted their support for any and every policy but that which would free them from their poverty-stricken condition.

The I.L.P., the Labour Party, and the Communist Party had programmes which they claimed would benefit the working class. The Socialist Party of Great Britain also had a programme, but unlike the programmes of the Parties mentioned, which wish to reform the present order in certain details, the Socialist programme was one of Social Revolution. Nothing short of the complete abolition of capitalism and the establishment of Socialism would serve the interest of the working class.

The Communist Party spread confusion among the workers by advocating such nostrums as a £4 minimum wage and a six-hour working day, abolition of the House of Lords, &c. Their policy changed so often that it was difficult at times to know where they stood. As an example of this, his (Shaw's) opponent and others, as Communist candidates in Glasgow, recently advocated a £3 minimum and a seven-hour day. Having failed to get working class support for their reforms at previous elections the Communist Party had reduced this particular reform from £4 to £3 a week. There was no difference between tactics such as these and of those used by Labour politicians to whom Communists professed to be opposed.

For years the Communist Party had been telling the workers that Socialism was in being in Russia. This was false. The workers in that country were at the present time producing commodities for sale and being exploited as in other capitalist countries. Capitalism, not Socialism, was developing in Russia. The social relations of wage-labour and capital were the order of the day in Russia and were developing under the name of the Five Year Plan.

The Five Year Plan (much boosted by Communists) was merely a step taken in the Industrialising of Russia, and Industrialisation would develop in Russia as it

had done in any other country—at the expense of the worker.

The majority of the population of Russia were peasants, with the peasant individualistic outlook, and largely illiterate. It was difficult enough to get the workers of western capitalist countries to understand Socialism (where all the conditions were favourable and reflected this idea) but how much more difficult would it be in such a backward country as Russia?

Russia held out no example to the workers of Britain or any other capitalist country of how to establish Socialism. On the contrary, as Marx had pointed out many years ago in the preface to his work "Capital," the more highly developed country held out to the lesser developed the image of its own future.

The position of the Socialist Party was that Socialism could only come about by the intelligent action of an enlightened working class, organised in a Revolutionary Socialist organisation to get control of the State machine for that purpose. No reforms or palliative measures could be advocated by such a Party to side-track the workers, therefore he (Shaw) would ask the workers present to support such a policy and reject the reformist and muddled policy of the Communist Party of Great Britain.

THE COMMUNIST PARTY'S CASE.

Peter Kerrigan, on behalf of the Communist Party of Great Britain, stated that he agreed with his opponent that the abolition of capitalism was the only hope of the workers. At the present stage of capitalist development we were in a period of permanent crisis. The policy of the Communist Party was framed to apply to conditions as they were at present. The Communist Party took part in all the struggles of the working class, hence their programme had to be broad enough to cover all details of working class life. The representative of the S.P.G.B. was in error when he referred to the programme of the Communist Party as a programme of reforms. Since capitalism, to-day, was at the stage where it could not grant the demands of the workers, those so-called reforms were revolutionary in character. The immediate needs of the workers were of more importance than the abstract theories of the S.P.G.B. By lining up with the workers in every

struggle we would ultimately arrive at unity. We could get unity only by preaching what the workers wanted. A seven-hour day was a need of our class; therefore we ought to advocate it and organise the workers for it. The masters were lowering wages; therefore we should strive with the workers in order that wage-cuts be resisted. Marx in "Value, Price and Profit" made this quite clear. In the day to day struggle of the workers the S.P.G.B. were of no assistance.

Shaw had stated that capitalism was the order of the day in Russia. Such a statement showed that his opponent did not understand the Russian situation. Socialism was being built in Russia. A workers' government was in control there, and there was no unemployment. The workers being in control of their own affairs were better off.

There were three systems of economy in Russia: 1 Handicraft in backward areas, 2 Concessions (under control of the Workers' State), 3 Socialist economy. The Socialist economy was fast ousting the Concessionaires and abolishing handicraft. The workers granted concessions to outside capitalists, only in order to develop Russian industry.

Lenin had shown that the workers here could learn many valuable lessons from Russia, and, while learning those lessons, they should give Russia every assistance possible.

The S.P.G.B. wanted the workers to get control of the State. Marx said that the State machine must be broken and replaced by a Workers' State. So much for the Marxism of the S.P.G.B.!

Did the S.P.G.B. think that the masters would allow them to peacefully achieve their goal? He (Kerrigan) did not think so. The whole of the past history was against such a theory. The workers must be armed and establish the Dictatorship of the Proletariat. This meant a new form of the State and would be the fullest Democracy.

The programme, as outlined by the speaker, was the correct policy for a revolutionary workers' party, and he would ask the workers present to support it.

SOCIALIST PARTY REPLY.

Shaw, for the next fifteen minutes, dealt with the points raised by the Communist speaker. First of all, he said, Kerrigan

seemed to think that by merely asserting a proposition, it was so. He would remind his opponent, that he who puts forward a proposition must back it up with evidence.

His opponent had stated that the programme of the Communist Party was framed to deal with the immediate needs of the workers. This plea had been put forward by reformers of all shades of opinion. Conservatives, Liberals and Labourites had used this plea with disastrous effect on the workers who accepted it. If the workers accepted the Communist plea the effect would be no less disastrous. His opponent had failed to show how any of the planks of the Communist programme could alter the position of the workers, if any, or all of them, were put on the Statute Book. The workers would still be in poverty, would still be slaves to those who own the means of life. If unity could be achieved by this method, it certainly would not be unity for Socialism.

So far as wages disputes were concerned, the S.P.G.B., being of the working class, had of necessity to take part in this every-day struggle. Who could avoid it if they be workers. The columns of the official organ of the Socialist Party, the "Socialist Standard," were used to point out the correct tactics to be adopted, as conditions determined, in such struggles. At the same time the limitations of such struggles were pointed out.

There was nothing revolutionary in fighting a wages battle with the employers. People holding all kinds of political opinions, from the die-hard Tory to the blow-hard Labourite, took part in such fights and did not desire Socialism; many, on the contrary, were strongly opposed to anything suggestive of Socialism.

His opponent had made the assertion that Socialism was being built in Russia, but had failed to submit any evidence of his assertion. When such evidence was produced it would be dealt with.

Arming the workers to smash the State had been put forward by his opponent as a means of Social Revolution, but he had not informed us where the workers were to obtain arms, and who was to train them. And did he think the masters in the meantime would stand idly by, perhaps putting a donation into their collection boxes in order to assist them? The

advocacy of physical force was a suicidal policy. The workers were no match for the trained disciplined forces of the State. If the workers in Clydebanks were to attempt to defy the State forces in the manner advocated by the Communist Party it would mean an early grave for them. A couple of battleships on the Clyde could turn Clydebanks into a cemetery in the twinkling of an eye, and would do so if the workers there ever attempted to put into practice the nonsense taught by the Communist Party. This policy would lead to the shambles, not to emancipation. Engels, in his preface to Marx's "Class Struggles in France," had pointed out, over thirty years ago, that he who would advocate street fighting and violent uprisings was an idiot, yet here we had the Communist Party advocating that workers should fight the State forces. The development of the technique of modern warfare itself was sufficient to render this method obsolete and impossible.

The only sane, safe and sure method of overthrowing capitalism was, as Engels pointed out, to control the armed forces by getting control of the State machine. This was the Marxian method, the method of the S.P.G.B.

SECOND SPEECH FOR THE COMMUNIST PARTY.

Peter Kerrigan, in his next fifteen minutes contribution, stated that he was surprised that Shaw, instead of wasting time by accusing his opponent of making baseless assertions about Russia, had not given the audience some data from authoritative sources to show that Russia was a capitalist country. Shaw's accusations on this score also applied to himself.

Russia, to-day, was in a period of transition to Socialism. The State industries there are Socialist forms and are developing. There is no unemployment. He would like to know where the industries are, in Russia, owned by capitalists. Shaw could not tell us, because there are none owned by capitalists. All industries there are owned by the people. The Constitution in Russia was the most Democratic that had ever been established. This Constitution gave the workers full control.

Surplus-Value in Russia goes back to the people via the channel of Social Services, and was used to better the conditions of the worker all round. Hours of labour were shortened and wages were increased.

It was only a matter of time before the workers of this country realised the great changes that had taken place in Russia, that one-sixth of the globe were establishing Socialism in spite of world opposition.

His opponent was opposed to the idea of workers fighting the armed forces of the nation, but he would assure them that this job was not so ghastly as it appeared to be. The Communist Party was carrying on a campaign of propaganda among the troops which was very successful.

Shaw's reference to Engels's preface in no way assisted him, as it had been proven, since that preface had been written, that the manuscript had been altered in some details by Bernstein. Bernstein himself had admitted that he had altered Engels's work.

On the question of a country struggling for the rights of nationality, he would remind his opponent that Marx had supported the Germans against the French in 1870. Then, again, Marx had enthused for workers using physical force whilst writing for the "new Rhenish Gazette."

The workers could not get their emancipation through Parliament. Before allowing the workers to do so the ruling class would abolish this institution. When the workers of Ireland had voted solid for Home Rule they were ignored. The same thing happened in Egypt and other countries. The workers here would have to do as the workers of Ireland had to do—take up arms.

LAST SPEECH FOR THE S.P.G.B.

Shaw, in his closing speech of five minutes, reviewed the ground covered by him and his opponent. The time allotted to both speakers was inadequate for them to deal in detail with the differences which existed between the S.P.G.B. and the C.P.G.B. Both speakers had to deal with the positions of their respective organisations in a general way. However, enough had been said to make it clear that only by workers becoming class-conscious, organising for control of political power as advocated by the Socialist Party of Great Britain could they win their emancipation. Any other method was doomed to failure. Socialism was the only hope of the workers, hence the Socialist Party would go on advocating and organising for it, refusing to be side-tracked and refusing to follow the Will-o'-the-wisp of

Social Reform as the Communists were doing.

LAST SPEECH OF THE COMMUNIST PARTY.

Kerrigan, in winding up the debate, wished to emphasize the fact that fighting for "immediate demands" was in no sense of the word reformist. The development of capitalism had made reforms a thing of the past. The I.L.P. and the Labour Movement promised the workers reforms but were not delivering the goods, and could not. The Communist Party, on the other hand, recognised the revolutionary significance of pressing forward with their programme of "immediate demands," as by this method they would go forward to the Dictatorship of the Proletariat. It was only by paying attention to the details of working class life and framing our programme accordingly that we would go forward to Communism. Mr. Cunningham, the chairman, after a few remarks on the able manner in which the participants in the debate had put forward their positions, threw the meeting open for questions, a large number of which were answered by the two speakers.

This was the first time the position of the S.P.G.B. was put before a Clydebank audience, many of whom had never even heard of the Party's existence, and on hearing the position for the first time received it in a manner which could only be described as "enthusiastic." Many of them expressed a wish to hear more of the Socialist Party case, as they had become disgusted with the Labour Party and considered that the Communist Party was no better. At the request of several workers, we decided to remain in Clydebank until evening and hold a propaganda meeting. This meeting was held and was so successful that Glasgow Branch decided to continue holding meetings in Clydebank during the summer.

Since the debate, we have held another meeting in Clydebank and our literature sales there have doubled. With persistent effort we hope to, in the near future, put Clydebank on the Socialist map, by forming a Branch of the Party there.

WILLIAM FALCONER,
Glasgow Branch Organiser.

Note.—In order not to allow inaccurate statements to gain currency we deal briefly with four assertions made by the repre-

sentative of the Communist Party which our representative did not have time to deal with fully. (1) P. Kerrigan said:—

The S.P.G.B. wanted the workers to get control of the State, Marx said that the State machine must be broken and replaced by a Workers' State. So much for the Marxism of the S.P.G.B.

The implication of Kerrigan's assertion is that Marx did not urge the workers to get control of the State machinery. This is quite incorrect. Two brief quotations will suffice to show that the Marxian position is that held by the S.P.G.B., i.e. that the workers must use the vote to obtain control of the political machinery.

Marx, in an article on the Chartist Movement, published by the "New York Tribune," on 25th August, 1852, wrote:—

"The six points of the Charter which they contend for contain nothing but the demand of universal suffrage. . . . But universal suffrage is the equivalent for political power for the working class of England, where the proletariat form the large majority of the population. . . . Its inevitable result here, is the political supremacy of the working class."—(Republished in the "Labour Monthly," December, 1929.)

Engels, Marx's intimate friend, wrote in "Socialism, Utopian and Scientific" (Sonnenschein edition, 1892, p. 86):—

The proletariat seizes the public power, and by means of this transforms the socialised means of production, slipping from the hands of the bourgeoisie, into public property.

It may be remarked here that Lenin, in his "The State and Revolution" (B.S.P. and S.L.P. Edition, October, 1919, page 30) gave support to this policy. He wrote:—

The proletariat needs the State, the centralised organisation of force and violence, both for the purpose of crushing the resistance of the exploiters and for the purpose of guiding the great mass of the population. . . . in the work of economic Socialist reconstruction."

(2) Kerrigan claimed that in Russia there are no industries "owned by capitalists. All industries there are owned by the people." He was not referring to the concession companies (which he admitted are capitalist owned) but to the so-called "Socialist" State industries and collective farms. What Kerrigan overlooks is that the State industries in Russia, like the Post Office in this country, are financed on borrowed capital; they are a source from which the investor draws interest on his investment, out of the product of the worker's labour. The original estimates of the Russian Government were for the raising of 6,000 million roubles (£600

million) for the Five Year Plan. This, with loans already outstanding would have increased the national debt to £750 millions at the end of the financial year 1932-33. (See Review of Bank for Russian Trade, June, 1929.) Actually the original estimates will be greatly exceeded. The above figures do not include credits obtained outside Russia and estimated at about £100 millions. Nor do they include investments of capital in the Russian Co-operatives, or the capital brought into the collective farms by the peasants in the form of animals and machinery.

The interest paid on State loans is 10% or more. The interest on tens of millions of pounds of co-operative capital is 8%. The interest paid to farmers on their capital brought into the collective farms is 5%. (See "Manchester Guardian," 4th March, 1931. Article by the Moscow correspondent.)

(3) Kerrigan further claimed that Engels preface to Marx's "Class Struggles in France 1848-1850" had been "altered in some details by Bernstein," and that "Bernstein himself had admitted that he had altered Engels's work." The mention of Bernstein is puzzling. Kerrigan is probably here thinking not of Bernstein but of a statement made by Engels himself in a letter to Kautsky to the effect that he had exercised restraint in the phrasing of his preface because of the possibility of the German Government re-enacting the anti-socialist laws. But the deduction drawn by some Communists is absurd. To suppose that Engels would avoid provocative phrases in the existing circumstances is reasonable; but it is not reasonable to suppose that Engels would categorically and in detail analyse and reject the idea of armed revolt as lunacy, and explicitly assert on the contrary that "bourgeoisie and Government feared far more the legal than the illegal action of the workers' party, more the successes of the elections than those of rebellion," if in fact he held precisely the opposite view. There is no foundation whatever for the view that Marx and Engels favoured the suicidal Communist policy of unarmed workers throwing themselves against the State and its armed forces. Such a policy is now even more impracticable than it was when Engels wrote in 1895.

(4) The assertion that Marx supported

the Germans against the French in 1870 has no foundation in fact. In the first Manifesto of the International on that war he wrote :

On the German side, the war is a war of defence; but who put Germany to the necessity of defending herself? Who enabled Louis Bonaparte to wage war upon her? Prussia! It was Bismarck who conspired with that very same Louis Bonaparte for the purpose of crushing popular opposition at home, and annexing Germany to the Hohenzollen dynasty. If the battle of Sadowa had been lost instead of being won, French battalions would have over-run Germany as allies of Prussia. After her victory did Prussia dream one moment of opposing a free Germany to an enslaved France? Just the contrary. While carefully preserving all the native beauties of her old system, she super-added all the tricks of the Second Empire, its real despotism, and its mock democratism, its political shams, and its financial jobs, its high-flown talk and its low legerdemains. The Bonapartist régime, which till then only flourished on one side of the Rhine, had now got its counterfeit on the other. From such a state of things, what else could result but war?

The very fact that while official France and Germany are rushing into a fratricidal feud, the workmen of France and Germany send each other messages of peace and good will; this great fact, unparalleled in the history of the past, opens the vista of a brighter future.

The above is dated "London, July 23rd, 1870."
ED., COMM.

A GREAT THOUGHT FOR TO-DAY.

Mr. J. H. Thomas, in a speech at the annual dinner of the National Union of Seamen ("Daily Herald," 21st July):—

"Divine Providence put us in office. . . . I conscientiously believe that it is a divine Providence that has ordained that a Labour Government and a Labour Prime Minister should face this problem."

But why the formality of a general election if the result is thus settled direct between a "Divine Providence" and its humble servant J. H. Thomas? And what chance will the Socialist Party have now that we are fighting not only the Tories, the Liberals and the Labour Party, but also Mr. Thomas's God?

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THE SOCIALIST PARTY OF GREAT BRITAIN.

OBJECT.—The establishment of a system of society based upon the common ownership and democratic control of the means and instruments for producing and distributing wealth by and in the interests of the whole community.

DECLARATION OF PRINCIPLES.

THE SOCIALIST PARTY of Great HOLDS— Britain

That society as at present constituted is based upon the ownership of the means of living (i.e., lands, factories, railways, etc.) by the capitalist or master class, and the consequent enslavement of the working class by whose labour alone wealth is produced.

That in society, therefore, there is an antagonism of interests, manifesting itself as a class struggle, between those who possess but do not produce and those who produce but do not possess.

That this antagonism can be abolished only by the emancipation of the working class from the domination of the master class, by the conversion into the common property of society of the means of production and distribution, and their democratic control by the whole people.

That as in the order of social evolution the working class is the last class to achieve its freedom, the emancipation of the working class will involve the emancipation of all mankind, without distinction of race or sex.

That this emancipation must be the work of the working class itself.

That as the machinery of government, including the armed forces of the nation, exists only to conserve the monopoly by the capitalist class of the wealth taken from the workers, the working class must organise consciously and politically for the conquest of the powers of government, national and local, in order that this machinery, including these forces, may be converted from an instrument of oppression into the agent of emancipation and the overthrow of privilege, aristocratic and plutocratic.

That as political parties are but the expression of class interests, and as the interest of the working class is diametrically opposed to the interests of all sections of the master class, the party seeking working-class emancipation must be hostile to every other party.

THE SOCIALIST PARTY of Great Britain, therefore, enters the field of political action determined to wage war against all other political parties, whether alleged labour or avowedly capitalist, and calls upon the members of the working class of this country to muster under its banner to the end that a speedy termination may be wrought to the system which deprives them of the fruits of their labour, and that poverty may give place to comfort, privilege to equality, and slavery to freedom.

Those agreeing with the above principles and desiring enrolment in the Party should apply for membership form to secretary of nearest branch or at Head Office.

THE Socialist Standard

The Official Organ of **THE SOCIALIST PARTY** of Great Britain.

No 325. Vol. 28.]

LONDON, SEPTEMBER, 1931

[MONTHLY, TWOPENCE.]

THE FOUNDING OF THE SOCIALIST PARTY.

Fifty years ago books and pamphlets dealing with the fundamental problems of social life were neither so plentiful nor so accessible as they are to-day. The principal writings of Marx, Engels and others were hardly known outside the few in this country who had a knowledge of languages other than English. Consequently when the Social Democratic Federation was founded in 1881 as a professed Marxian organisation (though Engels would have nothing to do with it) very few of its members were acquainted with the writings of Marx. The new organisation had the merit, however, of pushing the name and works of Marx before groups of working men. Although the few well-to-do people who were at its head, sought to keep it in their pockets as a private concern of their own, the information they made available bore fruit after a number of years and led to much questioning of principles and finally to an attempt to clarify the basis and policy of the organisation to bring it more into harmony with the political needs of the working class movement.

A good deal of the early policy of the Social Democratic Federation consisted of urging the adoption of measures of reform supposedly designed to ameliorate certain outstanding grievances of sections of the working class. These ameliorative measures were not sufficiently embracing to meet the aspirations of a group of radicals who had become dissatisfied with the Liberal Party, but wanted a programme that would appeal to the so-called "professional classes." This group, therefore, formed the Independent Labour Party in 1893. Still there was a feeling that even the new programme of remedial

measures was not nebulous enough to attract the large body of people desired, so the leaders of the new party, assisted by certain trade union officials, took part in forming in 1900 yet another new organisation—the Labour Party (known until 1906 as the Labour Representation Committee). From that time onwards the problem of uniting these three parties occupied a good deal of the time and attention of their respective officials and members, and periodical "Unity Conferences" were held. The idea put forward being that they should present a "United Front" to the "Common Enemy"—an idea that still befogs many who claim to be acting in the interests of the working class.

In the meantime dissatisfaction with the equivocal policy and hero-worship of the Social Democratic Federation had been growing, and a small group of critics developed who determined to try and tie the organisation to class conscious political action, and induce it to cut away the self-destructive reformist policy.

At the 1903 Conference the discussions were lively, and at the Conferences during the following two years they were livelier still. On the one side was a small, youthful group endeavouring to keep the class basis of the party clear, and on the other side the official group of older men (mainly well-to-do) who wanted to rule the party and broaden its basis to include all "sympathisers who were against social injustice," and were straining hard to achieve unity with other non-socialist bodies. Another bone of contention was the equivocal attitude of the Party Organ, "Justice," edited by H. Quelch, but owned by a private group over which the party

had no control. At one time it opposed the I.L.P. and the Labour Party and their leaders, and at another time it patted them on the back. At one time it denounced Hardie, Snowden, and others, and at another time urged members and branches to help in the election of these people to Parliament. The members who objected to this policy and urged genuine independence, were dubbed by Quelch "The Impossibilists."

In August, 1902, a paper commenced to appear in Scotland published by Scottish members of the Social Democratic Federation, with the title "The Socialist." The third issue contained an attack on the leaders and policy of the S.D.P. signed "Impossibilist." Subsequently the attitude of the paper gradually became more hostile, until in 1903 its adherents formed the Socialist Labour Party, copying the American organisation of the same name. This party was crippled at birth, however, with the fatal platform containing "immediate demands." At first the new party held to the position that the immediate object should be the conquest of political power, but later, under the influence of its American parent, it was swept away by industrial unionism. In fact it soon became apparent that the members of this party had really only changed their idols; Hyndman, Quelch and company were deposed, and De Leon and Connolly took their places.

From 1902 until 1904 the columns of "Justice" contained a good deal of correspondence from members criticising the attitude of the party and its leaders, and much impatient denunciation by Hyndman, Quelch, Lee and Max Beer. At the 1902 Conference there were some heated discussions on the political arrangements with Liberals, Tories, Labour, &c. There were also some caustic remarks made about the public banquet to Hyndman to which people of all political persuasions were invited, and at which they all indulged in back-patting, in spite of previous mutual denunciation as sworn enemies.

During 1902 a member (P. Friedberg) wrote a criticism of the party and its leaders which, as "Justice" did not publish it, he sent on to the American "Weekly People" (the organ of the American Socialist Labour Party). For this action the Executive expelled him and, later, expelled his Branch (Finsbury Park)

for supporting his action. The matter came up at the 1903 Conference and, under the influence of the ruling clique, the expulsion was endorsed and another member (G. S. Yates), who supported the action, was also expelled by the Conference on account of articles in the "Socialist" criticising the S.D.F. It is interesting to recall that E. E. Hunter (a member of the present Labour Party) was at that time a fervent supporter of independent class conscious political action; defended Friedberg, Yates and the others, and wrote articles on similar lines for the "Socialist."

Throughout 1903 the volume of criticism against the autocratic attitude of the Executive Committee and its compromising policy grew stronger and more articulate.

At the 1904 Conference at Blackburn matters were brought to a head. The Conference met on Friday, April the 1st, and immediately protests were called forth by references in the E.C. report to "Impossibilists," and a warm discussion followed. The next day (Saturday) the Conference had hardly assembled when Herbert Burrows asked for and was granted urgency to move that those who were constantly criticising the E.C. be called upon to apologise to the Conference and pledge themselves, without any reservations whatever, to cease such conduct in future. This was carried by 56 votes to 6. The six were then called upon for an explanation or an apology. None of them apologised. After hearing their explanation two of them were summarily expelled and left the Conference. The two expelled members, J. Fitzgerald and H. J. Hawkins, were candidates for the new E.C., and some of the delegates present (who had voted for their expulsion) had been instructed to vote for them to the E.C. In speaking to the expulsion resolution, H. Quelch had accused Fitzgerald of fostering discontent by means of economics classes!

The official group complained that the "Impossibilist" movement was a campaign of calumny and intrigue against old and experienced members and therefore against the entire body. They appealed to the Conference on the sentimental grounds of age, connections and years in the struggle, assuring the members that their experience had justified the necessity of political arrangements, "broadening" the basis of membership, and of support-

ing political representatives who did not share their basic views. Many of the delegates were members of the E.C., past members of it, and personal friends of E.C. members. It was with the assistance of these delegates that the E.C. secured a vote giving them full powers to expel without appeal any member or Branch who did not fall in with the E.C.'s view.

The two members expelled were delegates from Branches who had received instructions to vote on certain items on the Agenda dealing with questions of policy, but they were expelled before the items came up. The significant fact was that both had been nominated for the E.C. by several Branches, and therefore constituted a menace to the old official group. In fact, at a subsequent meeting of London members, J. Kent (since Conservative Mayor of Acton!) stated that he was present on the evening when the expulsions were arranged by Hyndman, Quelch and company around the tea-table on the evening of the first day of the Conference.

After the Conference the Watford Branch wrote to the Executive asking why their delegate (Fitzgerald) had been expelled. They were informed that unless they too complied with the Conference findings on the question of criticism they also would be expelled. This was an example of the method that was being adopted all round. The majority of the members of the S.D.F. were unclear on principles; the Executive deprecated discussion on principles, claiming that "we are all Socialists, we want to get on with the practical details." It was alleged that narrowness had hindered the growth of the S.D.F., which "was no longer a sect surrounded by hostility." It was sought to "broaden the base" and unite all "progressives" on temporary objects. The official group carried a packed Conference with them, and secured a vote giving them power (for three years) to expel members and Branches who were not prepared to give unqualified support to the uncompromising and reformist policy that was being followed. GILMAC.

(To be continued.)

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A Socialist Searchlight.

NEW COMMUNIST TACTICS—WHOLESALE BURGLARIES.

Workers' News (April 30th), a Communist paper published in Moscow for English-speaking workers living in Russia, contains an account of an unemployed demonstration at Wellington, New Zealand. The unemployed, "under Communist leadership," attempted to raid the Parliament buildings. Many were injured and several were arrested, including the Communist leader. He told the authorities that "they would organise wholesale burglaries and looting, inevitably entailing general turmoil."

In this way the Communists, bankrupt of ideas and ignorant of Socialist principles, come back to the old and discredited doctrines of individual attempts at law-breaking. And whoever heard of an intelligent burglar telling the police where they can round up the intending breakers of the law?

* * *

LIBERAL-LABOUR GOVERNMENT.

As it is certain to be denied later on that there were ever formal negotiations between the Labour Government and the Liberal Party, the following extracts from the *Daily Herald* have an interest:—

From the *Daily Herald* of March 23rd, 1931:—

The fate of the Liberal Party depends on the events of the next few days.

Either an arrangement must be reached which provides for a stable period of progressive legislation or an intolerable position must be ended by an appeal to the country.

A continuance of the present deadlock indefinitely is unthinkable. . . .

Already there have been a number of meetings between Labour and Liberal spokesmen and these will be continued during the week.

Among those who have taken part in these discussions are the Prime Minister, Mr. Arthur Henderson, Mr. Philip Snowden (before his illness), Lord Sankey, Mr. Lloyd George, Sir Herbert Samuel, and Lord Lothian.

From a *Daily Herald* editorial on May 29th, 1931:—

Two years ago to-morrow the country gave at the polls the verdict which threw the Tories from power and made possible the formation of the second Labour Government.

Like its predecessor of 1924, it is a minority Government. And hopeful Tories prophesied for it a short, feeble, and sterile career.

They have been disappointed. They will be disappointed.

They forgot that minority Governments are not necessarily either feeble or short-lived.

The Salisbury Government of 1886 was a minority Government; but it lasted its full term, and it heralded 20 years of almost unbroken Tory rule.

History may very well repeat itself. Assured now of Liberal co-operation, as Salisbury was of Liberal-Unionist co-operation, there is no reason why Mr. MacDonald should not hold office for a full and fruitful term.

* * *

FASCISM AND THE COMMUNIST PARTY.

Reply to the "Pan-Pacific Worker."

The "Pan-Pacific Worker," published at Sydney, Australia, is one of the disguises adopted by the "Communist International," calling itself for this purpose the "Pan-Pacific Trade Union Secretariat."

In the Australian Edition (12th May, 1931) a Mr. Herbert Moore, in an article on "Fascism," has a word to say about the S.P.G.B., the Socialist Labour Party, and the Socialist Party of Canada. He calls us all "thoroughly discredited and decadent." The other two bodies must of course speak for themselves, but the S.P.G.B. has never been in better form than it is now.

Mr. Moore's reason for regarding us as decadent is that he believes we "hold the illusion that we must pass through Fascism." He gives no evidence for this belief about us and he is, of course, completely wrong. We hold no such illusion. So-called "Fascism" is as old as capitalism, and simply means the readiness of the capitalists, whenever they think it necessary, to use their power for the violent and brutal suppression of any insurgent minority, either of workers or capitalists. This is a common feature of capitalist political history in every country, before as well as since the war. To say then that the S.P.G.B. holds the illusion "that we must pass through Fascism" is only true in the sense that capitalism without the possibility of such violence by capitalist Governments is, and always has been, inconceivable. But this is not the sense in which Mr. Moore uses it. He thinks that this so-called "Fascism" is something which has not yet happened in the English-speaking countries, but which may happen. Mr. Moore is quite wrong and should acquaint himself with the records of the British, the French, the

American, and the Australian sections of the ruling class.

The Socialist Party's attitude has been logical and consistent. The one way to prevent the capitalists from using their political power against the workers is to refrain from voting them and their agents into control of the political machinery. We have always urged the workers not to vote for any candidate who is a supporter of capitalism.

Compare our attitude with that of the Communist Party, which has Mr. Moore's sympathy and support.

In Germany, at the time of writing, the Prussian Communists are voting for the referendum initiated by the Hitlerite (Fascist) Party and the German Nationalists.

In Great Britain the Communists have supported Labour leaders notorious for their willingness to use the armed forces against the workers.

There was Mr. Arthur Henderson, who, as a member of the War Cabinet, urged the forcible deportation of the Clyde strikers in 1916. For years the Communists have urged the workers to vote for Mr. Henderson.

In 1922 the Communists voted for all the Labour Party candidates while declaring of them that "they support British imperialist policy in Ireland and India."

In Ireland they stand by the British machine-guns of the Irish Free State against the declared will of the majority of the Irish people for a Republic.—("The Communist," November 4, 1922.)

One of the most striking illustrations of Communist trickery in supporting avowed enemies of the workers relates to Mr. John Hodge, M.P.

At the 1922 General Election, which took place in November, the Communist candidate, Mr. Harry Pollitt, stood down in favour of Mr. John Hodge and supported him on the Labour party platform (see "Communist Daily," November 13, 1922).

Nine months earlier the local Communists had asked some questions of the Right Hon. John Hodge, who was already the Labour M.P. for the constituency. Questions and answers were published in the "Communist" (February 4, 1922):—

Question.—"Are you, if elected to Parliament, prepared to support the Government in bringing out the White Guards against strikers, as you did during the Boilermakers' Strike at Liverpool?"

Answer.—"Yes."

We commend this to the "Pan-Pacific Worker" for their consideration.

* * *

SOCIALISM—"FOR EXPORT ONLY."

Mr. J. T. Walton Newbold has for some time been a member of the Social-Democratic Federation. Until a month or two ago he was Editor of their journal, "The Social-Democrat." During the War the Social-Democratic Federation called itself the "National Socialist Party" and devoted all its energies to helping the British capitalists win their war. In the "Writers' and Artists' Year-Book" the "Social-Democratic Federation" advertises its journal in the following choice phrase: "Though Socialist, was pro-Ally during the War."

All of which leads us up to an article by Newbold and W. Craik, published in the Winnipeg "One Big Union Bulletin" (July 16). In this article, which describes the political situation in Germany, the writers denounce and ridicule the German Hitlerites on the ground that their official title, "The National Socialist German Workers' Party," is a "contradiction in terms." They point out that it is a useful name because it enables the party to attract all kinds of support, both big and small capitalists and also workers.

But why is "National Socialist" a contradiction only in Germany and Canada? Why not in England? Why is the policy of building up a party out of contradictory elements (*vide* the British Labour Party, or the Social-Democratic Federation) sound in England, where Newbold supports it, and unsound abroad? Why is Newbold so anxious to prevent his foreign readers from knowing the kind of policies he pursues at home?

* * *

THE FABIAN BOLSHEVIKS.

Mr. George Bernard Shaw, who received an idolatrous reception on his nine-day visit to Russia, has enormously cheered the Communists by his approval of their political and economic system. If they had stopped to consider exactly what Mr. Shaw says of them, they might be less happy about it. He told the I.L.P. Summer School that "the first thing I discovered, with great gratification, is that Socialism as established in Russia is Fabian

Socialism" ("Manchester Guardian," August 6, 1931). This particular description was used many months earlier by the Liberal, Lord Lothian, who was Shaw's companion on the Russian visit, and Mr. Shaw is not above borrowing a smart phrase when he hears it. It is absurd, of course, to describe Fabianism as Socialism, and we have for a quarter of a century attacked that misconception, but it is indeed true that the Fabian nightmare of State capitalism run by "intellectuals" is in many ways similar to the scheme of things in Russia. Long ago the similarity was referred to in these columns.

We wish the Communists joy of their new convert, who so lately was worshipping at the feet of Mussolini. We would, however, warn them that policies have a queer knack of "blowing up" as soon as Shaw endorses them. On August 10th, 1921, Shaw congratulated the Russians on their existing policy, including forced labour. Twelve hours later the Russian Government announced the abandonment of their policy and the introduction of the so-called "New Economic Policy," because the old one would not work.

On the present occasion Shaw's approval was hardly in print before the Russian Government announced a big extension of their existing policy of inequality of pay between different groups of workers. Yet Shaw, it will be recalled, defines his "Socialism" as "equality of income."

In one thing we can agree with Shaw, that is, in his assertion that the theories of the Bolsheviks are not the theories of Marx.

H.

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THE WORKERS' SOCIALIST PARTY (U.S.A.).

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The Workers' Socialist Party are our agents in the U.S.A., and the "SOCIALIST STANDARD" is obtainable from them at the above address.

EQUALITY AND THE WAGES SYSTEM.

The changes in the administration of some of the State industries of Russia, recently announced with the usual pomposity by Stalin, have given the capitalist press another chance to extol the alleged economic superiority of capitalist methods of production over what they mistake for Socialism.

Actually, these changes merely make more clear the essentially capitalist character of the Russian State industries, frequently pointed out in these columns.

Piece-work is to be extended, and many of the "worker-administrators" are to be sent back to the factories. The specialists and managers are to be given greater powers of control, and be more liberally treated. These changes, however, involve no new principle. Ever since the introduction of the New Economic Policy ten years ago things have been moving along this direction, albeit spasmodically and inconsistently.

Nevertheless, we have the "Manchester Guardian" seizing upon the occasion in its weekly issue of July 10th to expound a little capitalist economics. Speaking of the workers in the factory, the editorial scribe asserts that, "He may work slowly or badly but he will draw his wages just the same unless there is some system of fines or piece rates." It would seem that this brilliant journalistic gem dwells in a world where the "sack" is unheard of.

Wages are paid only in order that employing concerns may squeeze out of the workers that profit which it is the object of their existence to obtain. This applies whether the workers are on piece rates or not. Piece rates have the advantage, however, in those industries where the system can conveniently be utilised, from the capitalist point of view, of reducing the need for supervision to keep up the pace of production; a fact which led Marx to declare, "that piece-wage is the form of wages most in harmony with the capitalist mode of production," "Capital," p. 567 (Sommenseheim).

Stalin and his supporters, however, claim to be "Marxists." They declare that, "it is necessary to organise a system of a sliding scale of wages which would take into account the difference between skilled and unskilled labour." Marx and Lenin say that this difference will

exist also in Socialist society, even after the abolition of classes; that only in a Communist society will this difference vanish. Therefore, wages, even under a Socialist regime, must be regulated in accordance with the work accomplished and not the need felt."

Then they proceed to condemn "those trade unionists and economists who are in favour of equal wages" as being opposed to Marxism and Leninism.

To take the last point first, Marx certainly exposed the absurdity of the demand for "equal wages," a demand which figured prominently in the propaganda of a section of the Communist Party in this country (in the "Workers' Dreadnought" particularly) in its early days.

On page 31 of "Value, Price and Profit," Marx says, "Upon the basis of the wages system the value of labouring-power is settled like that of every other commodity; and as different kinds of labouring powers have different values, or require different quantities of labour for their production, they must fetch different prices in the labour market. To clamour for *equal or even equitable retribution* on the basis of the wages system is the same as to clamour for *freedom* on the basis of the slavery system." (Italics Marx's.)

It is obvious enough that Marx is referring here to wages under capitalism, but where did he speak of wages under Socialism? Stalin does not tell us. Wages, whether equal or unequal, are part and parcel of capitalism, i.e., a system based upon the ownership by the master-class of the means of living, and the consequent enslavement of the working class by whose labour alone all wealth is produced. Or, as Marx himself put it in his criticism of the Gotha Programme, "The system of wage-labour is therefore a system of slavery and a slavery that becomes more and more arduous as the socially productive forces of labour develop, and independently of the question whether the labourer is better paid or worse." (Section II, par. 5.)

The wage-labour system in Russian State industries, like the system here and elsewhere, is a system of Slavery. The spread of piece-work will intensify the slavery; it will enable the "Communist" rulers to squeeze more surplus-produce out of Russian workers, just as it has helped the

Conservative and Liberal capitalists of this country. Alleged "quotations" in support of it from Marx merely brand Stalin & Co. as hypocrites and their followers as ignorant dupes. The Russian Government must make a profit in order to pay interest upon its loans if for no other reason, and this fact alone is sufficient to explode the myth that Russian State industry is run on Socialist lines.

The Russian Government has to borrow money to run its industries, like any other capitalist concern, because it has to pay for machinery and raw material, because its employees have to pay for the food, clothes and houses they need; because, in a phrase, all the means by which these requirements are produced are private property. It has not established an oasis of Socialism in a capitalist desert. Had it tried to do so it would have been speedily annihilated.

Does this then prove that capitalism is the only possible economic system, as the "Manchester Guardian" would have us believe? Is the equality, which the Socialist Party fights for, incompatible with productive efficiency? In order to answer these questions it is necessary to be clear as to what we are to compare capitalism with, and also exactly what we mean by equality. If we compare capitalism with the forms of society which preceded it, we find that it has resulted in an enormous and unprecedented increase in the produce of labour; but it has also resulted in the concentration of the bulk of this produce in the hands of the few.

The gulf between the workers of to-day and their capitalist masters is greater than that which separated the peasant-serfs from the robber barons or the chattel-slaves from their patrician masters. Before the increased productive power of modern labour can become an advantage to the whole of society the instruments of production must become common property. They are socially operated; they have yet to become socially owned and controlled.

This of course involves the abolition, through political action, of the "rights" of the capitalists to own and control the land, factories, railways, etc. It implies the conscious assumption by the working-class, organised for the purpose, of complete control of the machinery of government so that they may obtain control of the entire industrial resources of society.

This abolition of classes is the equality at

which Socialists aim (not a mathematical equality of income which is fantastic and unwanted); but an equality of access to the means of living and of obligation to contribute to their production. Such an equality would render the term "wages" a meaningless one, for no one would be in a position to buy the services of others in order to make a profit, just as no one would be in the position of having to sell their energies in order to obtain a bare subsistence.

Under such a system it would be to the interests of all to expand the material resources of society as rapidly as possible in order to increase the common stock of necessities and amenities. For so long as these resources are fettered by capitalist ownership, whether in the form of private capitalism or nationalisation, the workers will be restricted to the consumption of such a quantity of goods as is sufficient to enable them to go on producing a profit. Hence we find everywhere that the capitalists, faced with a quantity of goods which cannot be sold, are compelled to take steps to restrict production.

Socialism will abolish the need for such restriction and while, even with the present resources of production, it would immediately increase the wealth available for the workers' enjoyment, it would also render possible a considerable expansion of those resources in order that the free development of every individual should be translated from a dream into a reality. E.B.

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1931

THE GREAT FIASCO

CONTEMPTIBLE "LABOUR"
GOVERNMENT.

We have just witnessed the inglorious exit of the second "Labour" Government after more than two uneasy years of office—two years of deserted principles, political bargaining, and cowardice. During that time the cherished theories of the Labour Party have been tried, and every one found wanting, and abandoned.

The Labour Party was to be a "high-wage" party. More than four million workers have had their wages reduced since Mr. MacDonald became Prime Minister in June, 1929. The Government confessed its inability to prevent the reductions, and indeed played an active part in some of them—notably those affecting its own employees.

It was confident that unemployment could be reduced by means of its schemes of development. Yet we have seen unemployment mount to a record figure, 2,700,000; the percentage of insured workers on the unemployed register equalling the highest previous figure (23%), attained under Mr. Lloyd George's Government in 1921.

Foremost in the Labour Party's programme was the belief that the workers could be protected against the worst evils of the capitalist system by means of social reforms, and further that their standard

of living could be supplemented and fundamentally raised by these additions to wages. In practice social reforms which reduce the necessary expenditure requiring to be met out of wages, have the effect of permitting corresponding reductions in the workers' wages without detracting from their efficiency as profit producers for their employers. The Report of Lord Mac-Millan, who was appointed by the Labour Government to inquire into the wages of wool textile workers, accepted this as a matter-of-course, and recommended lower wages on this very ground, that the social services had relieved the workers of expenditure on unemployment, on medical attention, and on maintenance during old age.

The Labour Party for the whole of its existence had preached Nationalisation. Then, when they came into office on this occasion, their spokesmen calmly abandoned that doctrine and put in its place the advocacy of public utility corporations of the kind introduced by Liberals and Conservatives in the Port of London Authority, and the Central Electricity Board. Mr. Herbert Morrison frankly accepted these as the model for his proposed London Passenger Transport Board. Neither Nationalisation nor public utility corporations would solve any working class problem, but the Labour Party, until it took office, professed to believe in the former as a panacea, and rejected the latter.

One of the principal arguments put forward for nationalisation was that state employees would be better paid than the workers in private industry, and thus the standard of living as a whole would be lifted by the nationalisation of one industry after another. Yet the seven Labour Party supporters on the Civil Service Commission, three of them Labour M.P.'s, signed the report rejecting this doctrine in its entirety. They declare that Government employees must not be paid more than is being paid for comparable work by private employers. They recommend lower pay for certain Government clerks for no other reason than that private employers are getting similar types of workers for a lower wage.

The sum total of all the Labour Party schemes of reform was to be a process of conversion by the example of practical works. The Labour Government would give the workers one after another of its

sheaf of beneficent reforms, rousing more and more of them to a pitch of enthusiasm, until a majority would be led to vote for Labour Government.

The events have been far different.

The enthusiasm of even the staunchest Labour voters has been undermined by instance after instance of successful attacks on their wages and working conditions, carried through without a word of protest from the Labour Ministry. How, indeed, could they protest while they were reducing the low pay of their own Post Office and other workers, and while the co-operative societies were doing the same?

The general defence of the Labour Cabinet was that they were the victims of an "economic blizzard." But it was precisely because they professed to be able to protect the workers against such blizzards that they went into office. No words can disguise their failure. "Economic blizzards" are a normal and recurrent feature of capitalism. It is an illusion to suppose that capitalism can exist without these crises of over-production.

Their promise to give the workers "something now" in the shape of reforms was not only unfulfilled, but they ended up by proposing to make a direct attack upon the existing social reforms.

The "Daily Herald" in its issue for Monday, 24th August, admitted that a majority of about 12 members of the Cabinet, out of a total of 21, were in favour of reducing unemployment pay in order to meet the wishes of the Conservatives and Liberals and the banking interests. This was the cause of the final crisis. The "Herald," in its Editorial, admits that the existing scale of unemployed pay is "barely sufficient to keep them in a state that will enable them to step back into industry when the time comes."

We are told that heavy taxation and the size of the Budget have brought the country to a critical position, and that economy is the only way out. Yet we observe that taxation was heavier in 1920 and 1921, and the Budget nearly twice as large. Is it that the crisis has been exploited with the object of forcing reductions on unwilling workers?

Alongside its other principles the Labour Government also shed the last vestige of its boasted independence. It took office

on Liberal votes, just as it did in 1924. It carried on constant discussions and negotiations with the Liberal leaders in order to keep their support. At the end the negotiations were extended to include the Conservatives also.

Now we observe that Mr. MacDonald is to be Premier in a new Cabinet containing Mr. Baldwin, Mr. Snowden, Sir Herbert Samuel, and other Liberal, Labour and Tory Ministers. It is expected that Mr. Snowden will be Chancellor of the Exchequer. The reason for the inclusion of Labour Party Ministers was foreseen and disclosed by the "Western Morning News" (4th August, 1931):

Labour interests, which are bitterly hostile to economy in any form, may be brought by a Labour Government to recognise the facts and the unpleasant consequences which will result from ignoring them. They will take from Mr. MacDonald and Mr. Snowden what they would not accept from a Conservative Premier and Chancellor of the Exchequer, and for that reason, if no other, it is desirable to keep Labour in power.

The Labour Government failed to do this, but the Labour Ministers in the National Government will serve the same purpose. So the Labour Party's supporters are now confronted with the humiliating spectacle of their leaders being once more—as during the war—part of a great capitalist coalition to solve the problems of the capitalist industrialists and bankers.

The "Daily Express" and "Manchester Guardian" reported (24th August) that the Labour Government's last miserable effort to cling to office was the submission of its economy proposals to the banks for their approval! The Labour Party stands now divided and discredited. Its Cabinet has fought no battle for Socialism. It has lived dishonestly and dies meanly and unlamented.

WHERE WE STAND.

It is an opportune moment to restate the position of the Socialist Party. We contend that there is no solution for the workers' problems except Socialism.

It is not possible for the Labour Party or any other party to administer capitalism in such a way that the workers' problems can be solved within the framework of the existing system. The failure of the Labour Government is not an accident. It is not due to mistakes in tactics, or to the failure of the personal element.

When they entered office Mr. J. H. Thomas declared on their behalf that they

were going to do what they could to reduce unemployment while "accepting the present order of society" (see "Daily Herald," 6th July, 1929). That was an attempt which was bound to fail, and what is true of unemployment is equally true of the poverty problem in general.

We dealt in our issue of June, 1929, with the certain failure of the Labour Government. Our words will bear repeating. Our confident prophecy is being fulfilled.

We deal elsewhere in this issue with the failure of Labour Government in Queensland. We prophesied that failure and with absolute confidence we prophesy the similar failure of Labour Government here. No matter how able, how sincere, and how sympathetic the Labour men and women may be who undertake to administer capitalism, capitalism will bring their undertaking to disaster. As in Queensland, those who administer capitalism will find themselves sooner or later brought into conflict with the working class. Like their Australian colleagues, the Labour Party here will find themselves in a cleft stick. Having no mandate to replace capitalism by Socialism, they have pledged themselves to solve problems which cannot be solved except by doing the one thing for which they have no mandate.

The reference to the Queensland State Government, although made in 1929, is relevant now because the Australian Federal Government—a "Labour" Government with a parliamentary majority, is at this moment carrying through a policy of reducing wages and of cutting social reforms exactly like the economy scheme of our own "National" Government.

Knowing that Socialism is the only solution and that it can be brought about only when the electors become Socialists, we have consistently opposed the Labour Party and its affiliated party, the I.L.P., which practise the dishonest political manoeuvre of seeking election on a programme of reforms of capitalism. It is dishonest because those who do it know that the reforms will not solve the problem. Their dishonesty has on this occasion soon been exposed. The logic of events has called their bluff. They fought the last election on the promise of an improved standard of life for the workers. The end of their inglorious tenure of office finds them hand-in-hand with their erstwhile opponents chanting the slogan of "sacrifices for all."

Again we urge the workers to abandon these illusions and make their choice against capitalism, including its Labour Party supporters, and for Socialism. The

Socialist Party of Great Britain is the only party in this country that has never betrayed the workers' interests by supporting reform programmes or capitalist parties.

AN APPEAL FOR FUNDS.

We are in urgent need of financial assistance, and make this appeal to our members and sympathisers to respond quickly and as generously as they are able. It is also necessary to point out that subscriptions are needed regularly because our dependence on donations is not exceptional but permanent. Perhaps some explanation is due to new readers who do not know the circumstances.

We are at present necessarily a propaganda organisation, working to make Socialist principles better known. But that costs money. Printer's bills, the hire of halls, our rent and lighting, all of these things have to be paid for. The money comes in part from members' subscriptions, the sale of literature, and from collections at meetings. We have, however, no wealthy supporters, and those subscriptions and donations are not enough to enable us to carry on our present volume of propaganda, let alone to increase it. We go, therefore, to our circle of sympathisers for assistance to maintain and extend our activities. We are a growing organisation, but there is so much more that we could do if we had the means. By advertising we have during the past year added considerably to the number of readers of the "S.S." If we had the money there is an almost unlimited field from which to gain more readers. Our clerical work, and our propaganda work, is carried on entirely by members in their leisure hours after working all day for their employers. If we had the money we could vastly increase the effectiveness of our propaganda by employing full-time organisers.

If you will give now and give regularly, you will be enabling us to carry on more and more effective propaganda.

Send donations to the Treasurer at 42, Great Dover Street, S.E.1. Acknowledgment will be made by receipt and in the "Socialist Standard."

THE SOCIALIST PARTY OF AUSTRALIA.

Readers in Australia are invited to communicate with the Socialist Party of Australia at Box 1440, P.O., Elizabeth St., Melbourne.

THE SOCIALIST FORUM.

SHOULD SOCIALISTS COMPROMISE?

To the Editor,
"The Socialist Standard," Grimsby.
Dear Comrade,

I believe myself to be just as revolutionary and equally Socialistic as any member of the "Socialist Party," according to the policy laid down month by month in the "Standard."

I am a Socialist and a member of the "Labour Party," also, I am expecting to help to improve the lot of the worker by winning a seat on the local Town Council.

I see only one way of helping the worker, as a member of a minority group on the Council, and that would be to compromise.

How would you suggest an uncompromising Socialist would act under similar circumstances?

Yours sincerely,

MATT QUINN.

The answer to Mr. Quinn's questions is simple. Either Socialists form a majority of his electors or they do not. (We have no doubt whatever that they form a very small minority.) If they formed a majority then the only way to get elected would be to stand as a Socialist, on a Socialist programme, and as a member of the Socialist Party. If Socialists are a minority then the only way to get elected would be to stand on a non-Socialist programme in order to get non-Socialist votes. Mr. Quinn is in a horrible dilemma. As he says he agrees with us, he must know that nothing but Socialism will solve the workers' problems. But as an observer of the electorate in Grimsby Mr. Quinn also knows that if he tells them so they, not being Socialists, will vote against him. To be a non-Socialist Town Councillor, or to be a Socialist non-Town Councillor? That is the question. If Mr. Quinn succeeds in being a Town Councillor backed up by non-Socialist votes, Mr. Quinn's ability to help the Socialist cause will be nil; he will have to pursue non-Socialist policies because otherwise his party and his electorate will turn against him. The answer to his question, what would we do under similar circumstances, i.e., if we were non-Socialist Town Councillors, is that we would not be in those circumstances. In other words, Mr. Quinn is quite mistaken when he thinks that he agrees with us and we with him. Our object is to get Socialism. Mr. Quinn wants to become a Town Councillor more than he wants Socialism. We suggested that if he wanted us to consider his policy on its merits he should send us his

election address. He replies that he has not yet got an election address but "In any case I should not have done so." We are surprised that a "Socialist" should be so reluctant to let us and our readers see the sort of bait with which he is trying to catch the non-Socialist votes of Grimsby.

May we ask readers in Grimsby if they will kindly help us to prevent Mr. Quinn from hiding his queer light under a bushel, and send us a copy of his election address?

ED. COMM.

* * *

HAVE WE MADE A MISTAKE?

A correspondent explains why, in his opinion, we should alter our methods.

The Editor,
"Socialist Standard."

Heygaka,
Wealdstone, Harrow.

Dear Sir,

When one looks into history we find that all movements live in action. In English history we have revolutions, riots, and strikes. Now I cannot conceive capitalism lasting that length of time in which your party will have converted the majority of the working class into class-conscious Socialists.

To my mind, and many others, I feel that the mass of the people will be ultimately led to their goal, without them all being convinced of the object in view.

Assuming in your opinion that all the other (so-called) Socialist parties have been wrong in the past, then from your party's inception, I may deem you the infallible guides to Socialism.

Now, to sum up your impregnable position, it amounts to this: "If we do nothing, then we cannot make any mistakes. I also understand your party are opposed to all other political parties. This statement admits that Socialism is only possible through your party. Now, I want to look at your party's progress from its inception, which, I think, is roughly 20 years. I assume your membership is approximately 1,000 strong. If we compare these two factors, and then consider the conversion of the majority of 20,000,000 electorate, your methods will not suit the mentality of the unemployed. Your Socialism is a good hobby for those in the best possible employment, they have a crust; but for those who are actually feeling the pinch and want something NOW, you'll have to begin making mistakes."

Yours fraternally,

AUGUSTUS MANNING.

REPLY.

Our correspondent's letter contains several lines of argument interwoven with each other. The first argument is that history shows the need for "action," whereas the Socialist Party believes only in theorising. What is wanted (especially by the unemployed) is something now. If the Socialist Party gives them "action" and

doesn't mind making mistakes, then we shall get Socialism.

The second argument is that capitalism will not last long enough for the people to become Socialists before the end.

The third argument is that the Socialist Party may be a good hobby for those in comfortable jobs but not for those who feel the pinch of capitalism.

The first thing we observe about these lines of argument is that they are mutually contradictory. In addition they are not supported or supportable by the facts of the situation. The second argument is that hoary old fallacy that capitalism will some day suffer a catastrophic collapse of its own accord. It is a vain assumption; but if it were true, what happens to the demand for action, for "revolutions, riots and strikes"? Why riot or strike to overthrow a system which of its own accord will not last?

The first argument also contains a very far-fetched assumption about the use of riots, etc. History, it is true, provides many instances of revolutions, riots and strikes. Our correspondent then says in effect, therefore these methods without any Socialist knowledge will give us Socialism. But why? What makes him think that while the innumerable revolutions, riots, and strikes of the past have not given us Socialism, that they will do so in the future? He gives not a single reason in support of this extraordinary deduction.

Then we are told to go in for "action" like the "something now" parties. But the very fact that our correspondent tells us that it is necessary to do this is the best possible proof that it is a futile policy. Have we not had in office the largest and most successful of all the "something now" parties—the Labour Party? If that policy is the right policy what is our correspondent complaining about? If we are wrong and they are right, why does he come to us to extricate him from the mess into which the "something now" parties have landed him? What does he want us to do? (By curious coincidence the Labour Government have only recently pushed through their Bill which will take away unemployment pay from thousands of the unemployed.)

The assumption that the Socialist Party attaches no importance to action is grotesque. What we want is sound action, the action of Socialists who want Socialism.

Of course we reject the unsound action of the "something now" parties. What else should we do? Would our correspondent have us participate in their actions, such as supporting the war, voting war credits, recruiting, carrying out armament programmes, voting for capitalist candidates, protecting the capitalist system, and—most important of all—preaching the false doctrine that the workers' problems can be solved by the "something now" policy of reforming capitalism? If that is what he wants us to do will he give us reasons, showing how these actions are in the interest of the workers?

Our slow progress is merely a reflection of the success of the propaganda efforts of the capitalist parties, including the parties of capitalist reform. But not even their most skilful propaganda will serve permanently to cover up the woefully inadequate results of their "something now" actions. Even our correspondent who professes still to hold to that policy shows by his letter that he is dissatisfied with the results of it.

The third of our correspondent's arguments is the weakest of all. Probably a third or more of our members are out-of-work now. Hardly any of them are so placed that they have not known unemployment or the threat of it. The three members of the Editorial Committee have all been out-of-work for lengthy periods. One was out for an unbroken stretch of twelve months. One is out-of-work now—and has been off and on for a year.

None of us, and none of the members of the Socialist Party, proposes to give up our action directed towards the attainment of Socialism, in order to perpetuate the endless, useless and dangerous mistakes of the "something now" parties. In due course the workers, disappointed with that policy, will join us and make Socialism a reality. We are optimistic enough to believe that we shall rope in our correspondent some day.

ED. COMM.

* * *

A CRITICISM FROM A RUSKIN COLLEGE STUDENT.

In July we published under the heading, "Is this Working-Class Education?" an extract from a book by Mr. J. G. Sinclair ("Portrait of Oxford") in which he dealt with the trade union

students at Ruskin College. A Ruskin student sends us the following letter:—

93, Fairacres Road,
Oxford,
July 2nd, 1931.

To the Editor,
"The Socialist Standard,"

Dear Comrade,

May I be allowed the space for a few comments on your article, "Is this Working-class Education?"

Of course it isn't! Neither is it the truth about Ruskin students. I have been a student in Oxford for the last four years; previous to that I was a coal-hewer in Durham. For two years I was a student at Ruskin College, and I confess that I am glad I ever had the opportunity for study that Ruskin College makes possible to workers. I must confess that I never tried to dress like the "Undergrad"—I wish I'd had the sense. At the same time I never had so much affection for my colliery trousers as to wish to wear them anywhere where they were not needed; never mind where they would be ludicrous. All the miners of my acquaintance treasured a navy-blue suit—generally because the week-end was the only chance they had to wear it. In Oxford a blue suit would last about three weeks. There has not been anything better invented for sitting about in than grey flannel trousers; they do not "bag" at the knees, they do not shine, and they can be cleaned for a "bob." And when you are hurrying from one lecture to another a cap is just a damned nuisance. Was our dress so perfect that a change was pure affectation? Was it so holy that a change was blasphemy? Do you have so little faith in those working lads who try to educate themselves as to accept the view of an arrant snob; that a miner, for instance, who went through the stoppage of 1926, could throw off his feelings with his cap? You may, as Marxists, criticise the curriculum, but at least give the lads credit for being as honest as yourselves.

The allegation that the Ruskin students cultivate the "Oxford twang" is just downright lying. That we tried to speak more correctly is true; but surely that is advisable? As for afternoon tea in North Oxford, I confess that I have often been invited—and gone; it is part of one's education to meet people from other social groups. But I have met very few Ruskin students who would not admit their ignorance much more readily than they would claim knowledge. Mr. Sinclair has not tried to understand the working-class students' position; I should say he is not capable of doing so.

May I now put another point of view. It strikes me as rather ridiculous that the working-class should not believe it necessary to educate its leaders. To send a man to Ruskin for two years is a waste of good funds; I say this after I have had the advantage of four years in this city of "dreaming towers and proletarian antipathies." The working-class movement prefers to rely on a bunch of middle-class sympathisers to act as leaders; they have had the opportunity to learn the art of "balancing the two sides of every question in good Balfourian style!" In Oxford "socialist" circles one will meet lots of people who believe the "dole" must be reduced to save the "insurance principle." Most Ruskin students have had, or will have, a period on the "dole,"

and, if only for that reason, have other views. It must be pointed out that not all the fellows who come to Ruskin College are actively interested in politics or other branches of the working-class movement. Some are merely interested in education from a cultural standpoint. Even making allowances for those, Mr. Sinclair's "portrait" is a disgusting distortion. More disgusting still is the manner in which so-called working-class journals have literally "licked their lips." If we are to accept the inference that working lads are not to be trusted, we are indeed in a bad way. Apparently we prefer the opinion of an insurance agent!

Yours fraternally,
A. DOWDELL.

REPLY.

Let us first dispose of the least important part of the controversy, i.e., that part relating to the clothes and ways of living of Ruskin students. Mr. Sinclair, himself a Ruskin College student, makes certain allegations about his fellow students and draws certain conclusions. These our correspondent hotly repudiates. We are not in a position to settle the question by a personal inquiry, and in the absence of further evidence we are quite content to accept Mr. Dowdell's statement that the picture drawn by Mr. Sinclair may not be an entirely accurate one.

The other part of the question is by far the more important. It was indicated by the heading to our paragraph which gave offence to Mr. Dowdell, viz., "Is this Working-Class Education?" We have always said—and this quite apart from Mr. Sinclair's gibes—that Ruskin College is not engaged in working-class education. The promoters of the College regarded it as a means of securing industrial peace between the owning and the non-owning class, but in practice its chief function appears to be that of training young workers to become labour leaders. Our correspondent admits this to be true, or rather he thinks that it ought to be true. He remarks that it is "rather ridiculous that the working-class should not believe it necessary to educate its leaders." If Mr. Dowdell were familiar with the Socialist Party's case he would know that we regard it as even more ridiculous, in fact, absolutely fatal to the working-class, that they think it necessary to have and to follow leaders at all, whether "educated" according to the standards of Ruskin College or not. The training of individuals, whether of working-class or capitalist class origin, to become "leaders" of the workers is most emphatically not working-class education. The leaders thrive not on

the knowledge of the workers but on their ignorance. Whether they are honest or dishonest these leaders cannot bring about Socialism for the working-class—that the workers have to do for themselves. Which means that they, and not merely their leaders, have to acquire knowledge. It is the purpose of working-class education to give the workers the knowledge. Such is not the purpose (or the result) of the activities of Ruskin College.

Our correspondent complains because the worker trained at Ruskin College gets cut out by the "bunch of middle-class sympathisers." This is hard luck for the Ruskin College student to whom the Labour Movement is a career. We are not concerned with blaming him or his more successful rival for so regarding it. What we are concerned with is the need to get the workers to rid themselves of their dependence on, and faith in, leaders.

Our correspondent invites us to put more trust in one kind of leader than another. Judging by results there is nothing to choose between the uneducated tub-thumper, the worker trained at Ruskin or the Labour College, or the "intellectuals" who have fastened on the working-class movement.

(For what it is worth, a case has indeed been made out by Professor Michel in his "Political Parties" for the view that the leader drawn from the ranks of the propertied class is more to be trusted than the ambitious worker who climbs to that position of eminence.)

Coming to Mr. Dowdell's last paragraph, the "working lads" with a desire to "lead" the workers are no more to be trusted than, and are every whit as dangerous as, their rivals drawn from the other class. Until the workers rid themselves of their trust in leaders they will continue to be misled, defeated, and betrayed, whenever suitable occasion offers. On the other hand, when the workers begin to grasp the essentials of Socialist principles they will not continue to hug the delusion that Ruskin College is an institution concerned with working-class education. ED. COMM.

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RATIONALISATION IN AGRICULTURE.

The March issue of the *International Labour Review* contains two very interesting and informative articles on Rationalisation in the U.S.A. and Canada, "The Economic Depression in North America" and "More Mechanisation in Farming."

In the United States, between the years 1919 and 1929, the output per head in manufacturing industries increased by 45 per cent. In agriculture the output increased by more than 25 per cent., and as a consequence during this time three million workers left the land to seek employment in the towns.

So much is American capitalism in the grip of rationalisation, that American capitalists estimate their costs and profits on the basis of providing a complete re-equipment of machinery every two or three years.

"Out of 200 large representative firms questioned on this point by the President's Economic Survey, 43.6 per cent. required new equipment to replace its cost in two years, and 64.1 per cent. in three years" (page 320).

To the uninitiated it might appear that there is very little room for further mechanisation in farming. This is not so.

There has been introduced into American and Canadian farming during the past two years machinery which has created a technical revolution. One machine, in particular, is worth special mention. It is known as the "combine," and both cuts and threshes the grain in one operation, thus eliminating a whole series of manual occupations between the cutting and threshing of the corn that were formerly necessary. Operated by only two men, it can harvest as much as 40 acres a day. The results are a huge displacement of labour and the halving of the cost of production (page 336).

A large firm which formerly took on 30 men in the Spring and a further 120-150 during the harvest, now employs only 14 men throughout the year (page 305). It abolishes the need for additional harvest labour. "No extra harvest hands have been required during the last two years." Bang goes the English unemployed worker's chance of spending a holiday harvesting in Canada.

The "combine" was invented 10 years

ago, but has only recently been introduced and applies as a result of competition. It can be applied to other crops besides corn, e.g., cotton.

A substantial part of the 1929 crop is still in the granaries, and the 1930 crop is still unsold.

As a warning to workers who might be considering emigration, a Canadian provincial government minister is quoted as follows: "We have now too many people because there is no work for them." "And," says the article, "that in a territory of great wealth with little more than two to the square mile" (page 306).

Wealth, over-abundance, misery and suffering side by side! When will the workers see this glaring anachronism; and the remedy, the dispossession of the owners of the means of living, and the establishment of Socialism? H. W.

WHAT THE I.L.P. HAVE DONE TO THE WORKERS.

When we ask the I.L.P. why they support the Labour Party, in view of its non-Socialist programme and actions, we are always told, in reply, that the justification lies in the fact that the Labour Party helps the workers to obtain "something now." In the *New Leader* for June 12th, 1931, is a statement issued by the National Administrative Council of the I.L.P. concerning its relations with the Labour Party. It contains the following:—

It must be noted as a remarkable fact that to wage a Socialist fight against the poverty of the working class is made more difficult when a Labour Government is in power than at other times, and that obstacles are put in the way of, and threats directed against, working-class organisations maintaining that fight.

If the I.L.P. believe this, why did their members in Parliament continue to keep the Government in office?

They cannot even pretend that they try to "wage a Socialist fight," for Mr. John Beckett, M.P., one of their members, declared in an article in the *New Leader* (June 6th, 1930) that—

Every fight put up has been for purely moderate and reformist measures, strictly in line with election promises and Party policy.

And even if the I.L.P. were to fight for what they regard (wrongly) as Socialist measures, nothing worth while would result for the workers. Mr. P. J. Dollan, a

member of the National Administrative Council, writing in *Forward* on January 10th, 1931, stated:—

There is nothing in the history of European democracy to equal the progress of evolutionary Socialism in this country within the last quarter of a century. Practically every reform urged by the I.L.P. in the 'nineties, and many more not in the I.L.P. programme have been realised.

In other words, the present appalling condition of the working class is the result after the application of "practically every reform urged by the I.L.P. in the 'nineties." We have never said anything half so damning of the I.L.P. as this. Yet Dollan, far from being ashamed, far from being prepared to drop reforms and take up Socialism, can actually think of nothing better than to waste a further 25 years on more I.L.P. reforms!

H.

ANSWERS TO CORRESPONDENTS.

Mr. R. Hobsbaum (Tottenham).—We gather from your letters that you believe it to have been proved that a Socialist Party can be built up by emotional appeals. If you will tell us when and where this often-tried policy has been successful, we will consider the instance.—ED. COMM.

Mr. J. Osborne.—A reply to your letter will be published next month.

S.P.G.B. PROPAGANDA MEETINGS

LONDON DISTRICT.

Sunday ... Parliament Hill Fields, 8 p.m.
Tottenham, West Green Corner, 11.30 a.m.
Victoria Park, 11.30 a.m. and 4 p.m.
Walworth, Liverpool Street, 11.30 a.m.
Finsbury Park, 4 p.m.
Clapham Common, 6 p.m.
Cock Hotel, East Ham, 7.30 p.m.
Prince of Wales, Harrow Road, 11.30 a.m. and 7.30 p.m.
Battersea, Princes Head, 11 a.m.

Monday ... Ridley Road, Dalston, E.8., 8 p.m.

Wednesday ... The Fountain, Forest Gate Station, 8 p.m.
Prince of Wales, Paddington, 8 p.m.
Stepney Green, E., 8 p.m.

Thursday ... Prince of Wales, Harrow Road, 8 p.m.
Ridley Road, Dalston, E.8., 8 p.m.

Friday ... Mossbury Road, Battersea, S.W., 8 p.m.
Prince of Wales, Paddington, 8 p.m.

Saturday ... Jolly Butchers Hill, Wood Green, 8 p.m.
Tottenham Road, E.8., 8 p.m.

GLASGOW DISTRICT

Sunday ... West Regent Street, 8 p.m.

Monday ... Vulcan Street, Springburn, 8 p.m.

Wednesday ... Abbey Close, Paisley Cross, 8 p.m.

Thursday ... Raeberry Street, Maryhill, 8 p.m.

BRANCH DIRECTORY.

BATTERSEA.—Sec., W. A. Devine, 2 Hanbury-rd., S.W.11. Branch meets Thursday, 8.30 p.m. at The Waiting Room, Latchmere Baths, entrance in Burns-road. Discussion second Thurs. in month.

BECONTREE.—Sec., Hy. Gratton, 4, Drummond Ave., Brooklands, Romford. Branch meets 1st and 3rd Wednesdays at 7.30, at above address.

BIRMINGHAM.—Sec., E. Jesper, 32, Rollason-rd., Erdington. Branch meets Hill Top Café, 197, Spring Hill, 1st Sunday in month at 11 a.m.

CENTRAL.—Membership obtained only through the Ex. Committee. Applications to General Sec.

EAST LONDON.—Sec. W. Reynolds, 57, Weymouth Terrace, Hackney Rd. Branch meets every Thursday, at 7.30 p.m., at Limehouse Library (Committee Room), Commercial Road, E. Lectures on alternate Thursdays. Public invited.

GLASGOW.—Branch meets 2nd and 4th Fridays in month 8 p.m., at 118, Henderson Street, Glasgow, S.1. Sec., A. Shaw.

HACKNEY.—Branch meets Arcadian Café, 42, Amherst Road, Hackney, 1st and 3rd Fridays in month, 8 p.m., Discussions 9.30. Communication to Sec. at 21 Bridge Street, Homerton, E. 9.

HULL.—Branch meets 1st and 3rd Wednesdays in month at 15, Grosvenor Street, Beverley Road. Communications to M. V. Coupland at above address.

ISLINGTON.—All communications to N. A. Bishop, 39, Poynings Road, Highgate, N.19.

LEYTON.—Communications to Sec., 8 Cheltenham Road, E.10.

MANCHESTER.—Sec., D. White, 91, Rochdale Road, Middleton. Branch meets 2nd and 4th Mondays in month at 8.15 p.m., at Room 2, 183, Oxford Road, All Saints.

PADDINGTON.—Branch meeting held on alternate Wednesdays, 8 p.m., at 430 Harrow Road, W.9.

SHEFFIELD.—Branch meets 2nd and 4th Wednesdays 7.30 p.m., Room 5, Trades Hall, Charles Street. Public discussion after business. Secretary E. Boden, 74, Glenalmond Road.

SOUTHEND-ON-SEA.—Sec., J. Bird, 5, Wellington-avenue, Westcliffe-on-Sea.

SOUTHWARK.—Branch meets Fridays at 8 p.m., 42, Great Dover Street, S.E.1. Communications to Sec., at above address.

TOOTING.—Branch meets on the 2nd and 4th Thursday in the month at the Tooting Adult School, 971, Garratt Lane, S.W.17. Sec. (pro-tem), H. E. Hutchins, 174, Haydon's Road, South Wimbledon, S.W. 19.

TOTTENHAM.—Secretary, 18, Woodlands Park Rd., N.15. Branch meets 1st and 3rd Fridays each month, Room 2, Trades Hall, 7, Bruce Grove, Discussion after branch business. Public invited.

WALTHAMSTOW.—Sec. S. E. Williams, 64, Bloxhall-rd., Leyton, E.10. Branch meets at Workmen's Hall, High-st., 2nd and 4th Mondays each month.

WATFORD.—A. Lawson, Sec., 107, Kensington-avenue, Watford. Branch meets Mondays at 8.30 p.m. at Secretary's address.

WEST HAM.—Branch meets Thursdays at 8 p.m. at 167, Romford-rd., Stratford. Sec., P. Hallard, 22, Colegrave-rd., Stratford, E.

WOOD GREEN.—All communications to Sec., F. W. Godfrey, 28, Russell Road, Palmers Green, N.13. Branch meets 2nd and 4th Wednesday in month at 8.30 p.m. at Stirling House, Stuart Crescent.

THE SOCIALIST PARTY OF GREAT BRITAIN.

OBJECT.—The establishment of a system of society based upon the common ownership and democratic control of the means and instruments for producing and distributing wealth by and in the interests of the whole community.

DECLARATION OF PRINCIPLES.

THE SOCIALIST PARTY of Great Britain HOLDS—

That society as at present constituted is based upon the ownership of the means of living (i.e., lands, factories, railways, etc.) by the capitalist or master class, and the consequent enslavement of the working class by whose labour alone wealth is produced.

That in society, therefore, there is an antagonism of interests, manifesting itself as a class struggle, between those who possess but do not produce and those who produce but do not possess.

That this antagonism can be abolished only by the emancipation of the working class from the domination of the master class, by the conversion into the common property of society of the means of production and distribution, and their democratic control by the whole people.

That as in the order of social evolution the working class is the last class to achieve its freedom, the emancipation of the working class will involve the emancipation of all mankind, without distinction of race or sex.

That this emancipation must be the work of the working class itself.

That as the machinery of government, including the armed forces of the nation, exists only to conserve the monopoly by the capitalist class of the wealth taken from the workers, the working class must organise consciously and politically for the conquest of the powers of government, national and local, in order that this machinery, including these forces, may be converted from an instrument of oppression into the agent of emancipation and the overthrow of privilege, aristocratic and plutocratic.

That as political parties are but the expression of class interests, and as the interest of the working class is diametrically opposed to the interests of all sections of the master class, the party seeking working-class emancipation must be hostile to every other party.

THE SOCIALIST PARTY of Great Britain, therefore, enters the field of political action determined to wage war against all other political parties, whether alleged labour or avowedly capitalist, and calls upon the members of the working class of this country to muster under its banner to the end that a speedy termination may be wrought to the system which deprives them of the fruits of their labour, and that poverty may give place to comfort, privilege to equality, and slavery to freedom.

Those agreeing with the above principles and desiring enrolment in the Party should apply for membership form to secretary of nearest branch or at Head Office.

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LONDON, OCTOBER, 1931

[MONTHLY, TWOPENCE.

LABOUR PARTY AND THE CRISIS.

DUPLICITY OF THE LEADERS.

Since August 24th, when the National Government was formed, the Labour Party, under its new leader, Mr. Henderson, has sought to explain the collapse of the Labour Government as the refusal of the bulk of the Labour Ministers to sacrifice the unemployed to the demand of the banks and of the Tory and Liberal Parties. We are asked to believe that the Labour Party, innocent of any intention to compromise with the capitalist class or the openly capitalist parties, was suddenly invited by Mr. Snowden and Mr. MacDonald to enter into an unholy compact, and met this invitation with stout opposition and indignant resignation. So the *Daily Herald* has fulminated against the National Government's callous reduction of unemployment pay, and of the pay of policemen, teachers, soldiers and sailors, and Civil Servants. The Labour Party have proclaimed themselves the defenders of the workers and the upholders of independent working class political action against the parties of wealth and privilege.

It is a story which crumbles to pieces on investigation. Everything that MacDonald and his associates have done, the majority of the present leaders of the Labour Party were prepared to do. Not one word or one action of the Labour leaders in the National Government but can be paralleled from the history of the Labour Party and its present leaders.

Mr. MacDonald entered a Coalition Government with Liberal and Tory associates and depending upon their votes; Mr. Henderson and Mr. Clynes and others were members of the war-time Coalition Governments with the support of the

Labour Party. In 1924, and again from 1929 to August, 1931, the Labour Governments held office solely on condition that their policy met with the approval of the Liberal M.P.'s on whose votes the Governments depended. Did Mr. Henderson protest? How could he when he was one of the Labour Ministers appointed for the purpose of carrying on formal negotiations with the Liberal leaders. (See *Daily Herald*, March 23rd, 1931.)

Moreover, the discussions and negotiations with Tories as well as Liberals were going on without a word of protest from Mr. Henderson or the *Daily Herald* for weeks before the National Government was formed. The *Labour Magazine*, official organ of the Labour Party, in its issue for September, records that members of the Government, on the instruction of the Cabinet, met the Liberal and Tory leaders for a joint conference on August 13th. Mr. Henderson and his associates made no protest and did not resign.

On August 14th, 1931, Mr. J. R. Clynes, who now denounces Mr. Thomas for entering into the National Government, made a speech at The Dome, Brighton, appealing for co-operation between the three political parties. *The Times* (August 15th) gave a report of Mr. Clynes's speech, from which the following is an extract:—

My sincere belief is that all of us attached to different parties, Conservative, Liberal, and Labour, are in earnest when we say that, although serving through parties, we are seeking to serve the country. Just as I believe that of myself, I believe the same of my political opponents. But at a time like this we want not separate, not single nor hostile and conflicting action; we want to act in co-operation in order

that we shall guarantee that the nation's interests shall be served by that united action which we know our condition demands. Parties must act co-operatively when the nation is faced with a financial crisis or a crisis of any other kind. The country has the right not merely to seek but to expect and to demand co-operation on the part of the three great political parties.

It is said that the Labour Government fell because the Trade Union M.P.'s threatened to form a new political organisation.

But by what right can the members of the General Council of the Trades Union Congress condemn the policy of collaboration with the representatives of the capitalist class? What of the negotiations for industrial peace carried on first with the late Lord Melchett and later with the organised employers? As recently as July 22nd, 1931, the *News-Chronicle* published an interview with Mr. W. Citrine, Secretary of the T.U.C., in which Mr. Citrine expressed views about industrial disputes resulting from attempts to reduce wages:—

But Mr. Citrine, looking ahead, believes that these difficulties in the relation between capital and labour can be and will be overcome. The modern trend towards large industrial units, towards the separation of the ownership of capital from its administration, towards greater regulation of control, will make it possible. He looks forward to the time when great industrial units will be able to speak with the united voice of capital and labour, and actually bargain for trade on that basis.

He refuses to accept the old definition of "capitalism" or the old dogmas about it. It has changed out of all recognition.

Mr. Citrine here repudiates the very basis of working-class organisation and looks forward to the time when the exploiters and the exploited will speak with a "united voice." Socialists appreciate the absurdity of this. But on what ground does Mr. Citrine denounce Mr. MacDonald for trying to apply the same absurd policy to politics?

We are told that the late leader of the Labour Party has carried out the wishes of the City and the banks. True! But which of the Labour leaders is in a position to protest? As early as August 11th, on the instructions of the Cabinet, certain Ministers met the bankers (see *Manchester Guardian*, September 8th). The Hendersons and Lansburys, who now proclaim so loudly their detestation of consulting with the workers' enemies, made no sign of disapproval. They continued to cling to their highly paid posts,

held at the pleasure of the Liberal Party.

On August 14th the *Daily Herald* reported, without any expression of disapproval, that the Cabinet were to place their economy proposals before the leaders of the other two parties. The *Herald* said:—

Whatever steps are taken finally, the Cabinet is as one man on the policy which will govern its decisions. The Budget must be balanced on the basis of equal sacrifices by all. In this it has the complete support of the City. To this extent, also, it is certain it will have the concurrence of all Opposition leaders.

The *Herald*, it will be observed, had no objection then to a policy of sacrifices from all, including the workers, so framed that it would have "the complete support of the City."

The Labour Party under Mr. Henderson self-righteously repudiates the policy of balancing the Budget at the expense of the workers and the unemployed. But for how long have they held these views?

On Monday, August 14th—a week before the resignation of the Labour Government—the *Daily Herald* came out with this great thought:—

Nobody likes tightening his belt. But the British do it better than most people. They will do it cheerfully if it is plain beyond doubt that they are engaged in a common effort in a common need.

The *Labour Press Service*, issued by the Labour Party and the Trades Union Congress, in its issue dated August 19th had the following:—

The nation's Budget must be balanced. The task is urgent; success depends upon sacrifice, and sacrifice is seldom agreeable. But the Government cannot shirk its duty because of the disagreeableness of the task. The Labour movement would not desire it to shed its responsibility; on the contrary it will be more confident of a just and equitable handling of the emergency if it knows that its own trusted leaders are in control.

The "sacrifices" agreed to by the whole of the Labour Cabinet included the reductions in the pay of teachers, the police, the Army and Navy, the Civil Service (5-point drop in cost-of-living bonus), increased unemployed insurance contributions, and the imposition of a "needs test" to transitional unemployment pay after 26 weeks. Mr. J. H. Thomas in the House of Commons on September 11th showed that the proposals of the old and the new Governments differed only in respect of the 10 per cent. cut in the amount of unemployment pay. (See *Hansard* of that date.) The lame

reply of the Labour Party opposition was that they had only agreed "provisionally," i.e., they were still bargaining with the Liberals and Tories and the bankers about their economy programme. Moreover, a clear majority of the Labour Cabinet had agreed to the 10 per cent. cut in unemployment pay. The *Daily Herald* on August 24th gave the names of the minority of eight Ministers who opposed the cut, leaving a majority of twelve who supported it. The *Times* of the same date also gave these figures. On the following day the *Herald* apologised for omitting one name from the minority.

Let it not be forgotten, too, that these economy cuts had all been prepared for by the former Labour Government and its supporters. The Economy Committee under Sir George May was set up and its members chosen by the Labour Government. The two Labour Party members on it, Mr. Arthur Pugh and Mr. Charles Latham, in their Minority Report, specifically recommended lower pay for Government industrial employees, and a 12½ per cent. cut for teachers (the National Government announced a 15 per cent. cut, subsequently reduced to 10 per cent.). They also endorsed the majority's acceptance of further reductions in Civil Service pay in accordance with falls in the Ministry of Labour Cost-of-Living Index.

The seven Labour Party members of the Civil Service Commission likewise endorsed the recommendations which fixed the pay of the lower grades at a level about 9 per cent. below that at which it stood when the Commission commenced its work.

One of the Ministers who resigned was Mr. A. V. Alexander, who as a representative of the Co-operators gave tacit endorsement to their policy of reducing the wages of their employees earlier in the year, justifying the reductions on the ground that prices had fallen. This was the excuse used by the National Government.

As recently as July, 1931, the Labour Government itself introduced the so-called Anomalies Bill, which was for the purpose of reducing expenditure on unemployment pay by £5 millions.

In short, the Labour Party does not differ in any important respect from those of its leaders who joined the National Government. The difference merely is that one body of leaders found that their policy

was leading them into conflict with the workers and Trade Unions, without whose support their careers would be endangered. They were willing to carry on capitalism and to do all that that implies, so long as the workers could be hoodwinked into accepting the results of that policy. At signs of revolt, Mr. Henderson and his supporters withdrew into safety. Mr. MacDonald and his associates either interpreted the workers' state of mind differently or have got beyond the stage of needing the support of the Trade Unions and the Labour Party.

The Labour Party remains what it always was, a party composed of all sorts of reformers, only agreed in being prepared to accept the continuance of capitalism.

Their withdrawal into opposition was hailed by them as a timely re-uniting of dissident groups. Actually it disclosed once more the rotten foundation on which the Party is built. Just as the National Government contains capitalist elements whose interests demand free trade, and others whose interests demand tariffs, so also the Labour Party is divided on this question of two alternate methods of conducting capitalism. While Lord Beaverbrook's *Evening Standard* (September 10th) was holding out an invitation to the Labour Party Protectionist group to join forces with him, *Reynolds's Illustrated News* (September 6th), the organ of the Co-operators and strongly Free Trade, was denouncing tariff advocates as "the enemies of the people." The same issue of *Reynolds's* confessed that tariffs have powerful advocates among the Trade Unions and their leaders. To meet the activities of the Labour Party Protectionists, the Free Trade Labour M.P.'s have now formed their own Free Trade group inside the Parliamentary Labour Party. (See *Manchester Guardian*, August 22nd.)

The Labour Party is not a Socialist Party. It is not even united in its views as to the best way of running capitalism. Its record shows that its leaders are willing and able to use it against the interests of the workers. Workers who take to heart the lessons of the recent crisis will abandon it and join the Socialist Party. H.

YOUR Newsagent can obtain this journal from Wholesale Agents: W. H. Smith & Son, Strand House, W.C.

THE COMMUNISTS AND THE LABOUR PARTY

HOW MOSCOW HELPED MACDONALD.

Young workers attracted to the Communist Party by its denunciation of the recent Labour Government and of the Labour leaders in the National Government, are often unaware that the Communist Party for years supported the Labour Party and urged the workers to place power in their hands. The Communists now wish many of their past activities forgotten. They do not want the workers to remember that the Communist Party willingly associated with the MacDonalds and Hendersons in the anti-working-class policy of preaching that the way to Socialism was through "Labour" Governments and capitalist reforms. But it is important that these activities should not be forgotten, nor their lessons overlooked. The hold that MacDonald and Henderson, Thomas and Clynes, and the other Labour Party defenders of capitalism have over the minds of the workers has been strengthened by the work of the Communist Party and the Communist International in the past ten years. Below is a brief record which will show that this serious charge against the Communists is founded on indisputable evidence taken from their own official publications.

1921—OPPOSITION TO THE LABOUR PARTY.

In March, 1921, the Communists opposed Mr. J. R. MacDonald, then standing as Labour candidate at Woolwich East in a by-election, and in August of the same year they ran a candidate, Mr. R. Stewart, against the Labour candidate, Mr. Morgan Jones, at Caerphilly, Glamorgan. On both occasions the Communists denounced the Labour candidates and the Labour Party in the most downright manner. Mr. R. Stewart made the accusation that leading members of the Labour Party were "responsible for the . . . defeat of the miners" in the lock-out which occurred that year. He justified the Communist Party's opposition to the Labour Party in quite simple and straightforward terms. In an article in the *Communist* (August 20th, 1921) he wrote:—

But, it may be asked, why do the Communists oppose the Labour Party at Parliamentary elections? We oppose the Labour Party for the simple reason that it is not a *Labour Party* at all. (Italics his.)

He faced up honestly to the charge of "splitting the vote," and gave a direct answer:—

The answer to all that is that the Communist Party is splitting not the "Labour Vote"—whatever that may mean!—but the voters in two important divisions—those who understand the need for the overthrow of capitalism and those who do not. We leave these latter to the Labour Party. (Ibid.)

1922—TRYING TO JOIN THE "LABOUR" CIRCUS.

In 1922 the Communists completely reversed their policy. They were applying for affiliation with the Labour Party. The Executive Committee of the Labour Party asked whether the Communist Party "proposes and intends to become a loyal constituent of the Labour Party, conforming at all points with its constitution and working for the promotion of its objects."

The answer given by the Chairman of the Communist Party on their behalf contained the following:—

The answer to this question is that the Communist Party in the event of affiliation intends to conform to the constitution of the Labour Party, without prejudice to its right of criticism on policy or tactics in common with all affiliated bodies. (*Communist*, June 10th, 1922.)

In other words, they were now seeking to join a party which they declared was "not a Labour Party at all." The application was rejected.

There was a General Election in November, 1922. The Communist Election Manifesto (*Communist*, October 28th, 1922) urged the workers to give "conditional" support to Labour Party candidates; that is to say, support only if they pledged themselves against any alliance or understanding with any "Capitalist Party," and if they pledged themselves to vote against all war credits, etc.

In practice this demanding of pledges was disregarded, and the Communists voted for even the most reactionary of the Labour Party candidates. Thus, at Gorton the Communists put forward Mr. Harry Pollitt as Communist candidate in opposition to Mr. John Hodge. Then they withdrew him and asked Mr. Hodge for "pledges." Mr. Hodge did not pledge himself to vote against war credits, and even on unemployment he declined to satisfy his Communist questioners. The *Communist Daily* (November 13th, 1922) said: "It is not clear from the Labour candidate's reply whether he agrees with this point in the Communist Party's pro-

gramme or not." Nevertheless, Mr. Pollitt withdrew his candidature and supported Mr. John Hodge.

Mr. R. Palme Dutt, a prominent Communist, writing on the Labour Party's election address, said:—

There is not a single working-class issue in this international policy of the Labour Party Executive.

With regard to that part of the Labour Party Manifesto dealing with home affairs, Mr. Dutt said:—

Their programme is a programme of Reconstruction, but it is the Reconstruction of Capitalism. (*Communist*, November 4th, 1922.)

Among the Labour Party candidates, whom the Communists supported at the 1922 General Election, were Mr. Morgan Jones at Caerphilly and Mr. MacDonald at Aberavon.

1923—HELPING "RAMSAY MAC."

At the 1923 General Election all pretence about "conditional support" was dropped. Now the Communists were not only willing supporters, but were almost lyrical in their enthusiasm for the leaders of the party which they said "is not a Labour Party at all."

MacDonald they had formerly described as a "lackey of the Bourgeoisie"; now they felt so friendly that the *Workers' Weekly* (December 7th, 1923) affectionately called him "Ramsay Mac." Their local branch secretary reported on their activities:—

We Communists here are doing our best to help Ramsay MacDonald to beat the capitalist candidate.

The *Workers' Weekly* described the election campaign as follows:—

. . . local organisations of the Communist Party are working for Ramsay MacDonald in Aberavon, Bromley in Barrow, Ernest Hunter of the I.L.P. in Hackney, J. R. Clynes in Manchester, and in hundreds of other constituencies. (*Workers' Weekly*, December 7th, 1923.)

In Barrow they were helping J. Bromley, the Labour Candidate. Their Secretary wrote:—

"All our illusions and theoretical deductions have been hung out on the clothes line to dry."

The *Workers' Weekly* article continued:—

Working-class unity is being forged in the fight. The Labour Party has officially endorsed as its candidates both Comrade Paul in Rusholme and Comrade Vaughan in Bethnal Green. There are now four Communist candidates officially supported by the National Labour Party. . . . Mr. W. Paul's trump card at the elec-

tion was a letter from Mr. MacDonald assuring the workers that Mr. Paul was a fit and proper person to be a Labour M.P.!

So the "revolutionary" Communists were united with a party which "is not a Labour Party at all" just for the sake of trying to get four candidates into Parliament.

1924—RELYING ON MAXTON.

After the 1923 General Election the Labour Party entered office for the first time as the Government. (They had, of course, been in the war-time Liberal-Labour-Conservative Coalition). Promptly the Communist Party issued a "Call to All Workers" (February, 1924), in which they complained because the Labour Government did not include "tried and trusty fighters like Lansbury and Smillie"; and Mr. Tom Bell, in the *Communist Review* (January, 1924), was assuring us that working-class interests were going to be looked after by Wheatley, Maxton, Johnston and Kirkwood!

SUPPORTING THE ENGLISH KERENSKY.

Soon afterwards the affection of the Communists for their friend, "Ramsay Mac," turned again to hatred. Yet, in spite of that, the General Election in October, 1924 (i.e., after the Labour Government), found the Communist Party again supporting all the Labour Party candidates.

The *Workers' Weekly* (October 17th, 1924) said:—

The Communist Party declares that the task of the moment is to return a Labour majority in the present election, in reply to the challenge of the capitalist class.

They did this in spite of their own admission that the 1924 Labour Government—

have behaved just like Kerensky in 1917. Instead of using their position to help the workers, they used it to help the capitalists. (*Workers' Weekly*, November 7th, 1924.)

Among the candidates they supported were their old friends, Mr. MacDonald at Aberavon and Mr. Morgan Jones at Caerphilly!

1926—HELPING THE BETRAYERS OF THE GENERAL STRIKE.

In 1926 occurred the General Strike. It was claimed by the Communists that that strike failed simply because of the failure of and betrayal by the Labour leaders. (See *Labour Monthly*, July, 1926.)

Yet, in face of this belief, the Communist Party continued its own betrayal of the interests of the workers by urging them to vote for these same Labour leaders. A Communist Party pamphlet, "Communism is Commonsense," published in July, 1926, i.e., two months after the failure of the General Strike, contains the following:—

... Communists urge the workers to support Communist and Labour candidates, *even if the latter are Right Wingers*, in the hope that they may reflect at any rate to some extent the needs of the masses, and that they will, when the present Labour leaders have got sufficient support in Parliament, form another Labour Government and by its futility prove the uselessness of relying on Parliamentary reform for the achievement of Socialism. (Page 18.) (Italics ours.)

At the Hull By-election in November, 1926, the Communists issued a leaflet telling the workers to vote for Commander Kenworthy, a recent recruit to the Labour Party. An amusing feature of this was that Kenworthy declared that he had not dropped his Liberalism, but was joining the Labour Party because that Party had taken over the mantle of Liberalism.

1928—COMMUNISTS STILL SUPPORT MACDONALD.

In February, 1928 (see *Communist Review* of that date), the Communist Party published a thesis giving its reasons for continuing to support the Labour Party. In the course of the article we are told:—

Even in the case of MacDonald, Thomas, Henderson and Co., the party cannot (1) advise the workers to vote Liberal or Tory, (2) advise mere abstention, (3) put up a candidate who would let in the Liberal or Tory.

It will be noticed that the Communists had now deserted their 1921 attitude of defying the charge of splitting the Labour vote.

Finding it hard to fight for their own programme, they had given up the fight. In 1921 they were optimistic and thought that they would receive the support of great numbers of workers. As soon as they found that the number of workers prepared to support them was very small, too small to give them Trade Union and Parliamentary positions, the Communist would-be leaders turned over to the policy of supporting Labour Party candidates so that they themselves could get the votes of workers still intent on voting for capitalism. The Communists were no

longer of Mr. Stewart's early opinion that it was desirable to "leave these latter to the Labour Party."

MOSCOW GIVES ITS ORDERS.

But at this point Moscow stepped in and ordered the British Party to reverse its policy. They were instructed to run candidates in opposition to some of the Labour Party candidates, but to support others. (See *Workers' Weekly*, February 24th, 1928.)

In the 1929 General Election the Communists ran 25 candidates of their own—all of them unsuccessful. By opposing Mr. Morgan Jones at Caerphilly and Mr. MacDonald at Seaham, Durham, the Communists had, after a long and costly detour, "progressed" almost back to their attitude of 1921. But whereas in 1921 their candidate at Caerphilly polled 2,592, in 1929 the Communist polled only 809. Counting only the election expenditure officially returnable, and including the lost deposits, the Communists threw away over £9,000 at that election.

1929—STILL PREPARED TO SUPPORT LABOUR PARTY CANDIDATES.

Their attitude in 1929 was still not one of straight opposition to the party "which is not a Labour Party at all," for they were prepared again to stage that piece of deception which they called asking Labour candidates for "pledges."

In a statement issued to the Press on April 13th, 1929, by the Political Bureau of the Communist Party, this crooked policy was explained:—

A Labour Government at the present day would be a Government of capitalist rationalisation, only differing from the Tory and Liberal Parties as to the best methods whereby rationalisation could be brought about at the expense of the workers.

It is, therefore, no longer possible for the Communist Party to advise the workers to give unconditional support to Labour candidates, even in constituencies not being contested by the Communists.

The Communist Party is advising the workers only to vote for such Labour candidates as are prepared to accept a policy of minimum working class demands, involving the repudiation of Mondism, of imperialism, and of the policy of trade union disruption now being actively operated in the trade union movement.

Unless these demands are accepted the Communist Party will advise the workers to refrain from voting. (See *Sunday Worker*, April 14th, 1929.)

Yet they admitted in their 1929 election

pamphlet, "Class against Class," that the Labour Party "is the third capitalist party. It . . . has nothing to do with Socialism" (page 8).

EXPLAINING AWAY THE PAST.

They also tried to explain away their "changed attitude to the Labour Party." "Class against Class" contains this tortuous explanation:—

Prior to the formation of the Labour Government in 1924, the Communist Party, although the leaders of the Labour Party were as treacherous then as now, advised the working class to push the Labour Party into power whilst sharply criticising and exposing the leaders of the Labour Party. To-day this policy is no longer possible for the following reasons.

The situation of 1929 is entirely different from that of the years prior to the General Strike and the Labour Government of 1924. In the years immediately after the war the Labour Party . . . was a federation of trade unions and parties offering facilities for criticism from within and a means of struggle for our Party to battle against the middle-class leadership and to strengthen the working class forces within it.

The Labour Government exposed the Labour Party leadership completely. It proved the Communist Party criticism to be correct. The "Minority" Labour Government was nothing more than a coalition with the Tories and Liberals. The Labour leaders "led" the General Strike only to betray it in the face of the challenge of the State. (p. 9.)

But, by going back over the statements and actions of the Communists during the past ten years, we can see how utterly dishonest this so-called "explanation" is.

The Communists, it will be noticed, justify their support of the Labour Party up to 1924 on the ground that "immediately after the war" the Labour Party was different. Yet, as we have seen above, they opposed it in 1921 for precisely the same reason as that which they give now. When Mr. Stewart declared in 1921 that it was "not a Labour Party at all," he was speaking truly.

They claim that the situation was different after the 1924 Labour Government. But, as we have also shown, they continued to support the Labour Party after the 1924 Labour Government. And was not the war-time Coalition alone a sufficient reason for opposing the Labour Party before 1924?

They claim, too, that the General Strike altered the situation and that the Strike was betrayed by the Labour leaders. Yet we have seen that after the General Strike they were still supporting these Labour leaders, "even if the latter are Right

Wingers," including a professing Liberal like Commander Kenworthy. And they would have continued to support all the Labour leaders, "even in the case of MacDonald, Thomas, Henderson and Co.," if Moscow had not ordered otherwise.

This is the record of political tricksters who claim in "Class against Class" that "No Party can serve the robbers and the robbed at the same time," and that the Communist Party is "the only Party of the workers." They have known all the corrupt arts of the political job-hunters except one; they have not known how to capture the glittering prizes. They should learn that some show of consistency and sincerity is required even in the most opportunist politician if he is to be successful.

H.

INDOOR MEETINGS

Every Sunday during October at 42 Great Dover Street, E.C.

S.P.G.B. PROPAGANDA

October 4th H. MILTON
"Capitalism—and the Case for Socialism"
Chairman—D. Russell

October 11th D. RUSSELL
"Industrial Development"
Chairman—W. Thompson

October 18th D. GOLDBERG
"Socialism and Gold Standard"
Chairman—D. Fisher

October 25th H. WAITE
"Parliament and the Workers"
Chairman—J. Kozky

Meetings commence at 8 p.m. Non-members invited.
Questions and Discussion. Admission Free.

GENERAL ELECTION

If you are willing to give away copies of our Election Manifesto send your name and address to the General Secretary at

42, GREAT DOVER STREET, S.E.1,
stating the number you can dispose of usefully.

OFFICIAL NOTICE.

All communications for the Executive Committee, Subscriptions for the SOCIALIST STANDARD, Articles, and Correspondence submitted for insertion therein, should be addressed—The Socialist Party of Great Britain, 42, Great Dover Street, London, S.E.1, to whom Money Orders should be made payable.

The meetings of the Executive Committee are held at the Head Office, every Tuesday, at 7.30 p.m.

TERMS OF SUBSCRIPTIONS.

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The Socialist Standard,

OCTOBER,



1931

THE GOLD STANDARD AND THE WORKERS.

In the formation of the National Government its partisans gave such a gloomy picture of the financial condition of the country that foreign holders of English securities got the wind up and increased their selling. As so much English money is tied up in foreign investments not easily realisable (particularly in Germany), the drawing of gold from the Bank of England to meet the situation increased. This gave the industrialists their opportunity, and on Monday, September 21st, vivid placards announced that the free export of gold had been suspended. This represents a victory of the industrialist section of the capitalists over the banking section, and it is curious to notice that preparations for abandoning the gold standard had already been prepared several days before.

The comments of the *Daily Herald* for September 21st are fitting expressions for the mouthpiece of the industrialists. In the Editorial they make the following statement: "Not only during the War, but for seven years after the War, we were off the gold standard, and the pound was at a discount against the dollar."

"There were no disastrous consequences. We were, indeed, far more prosperous then than now. And it was in very large measure the forcing of the pound back to parity that crippled our

export trade and created the heavy problem of unemployment."

Thus does the *Daily Herald* help to hoodwink the workers by blaming economic troubles upon gold. The "prosperity" of the early post-war period is apparent from the following unemployment figures, 1921 to 1925:—

1921	June	...	...	2,438,000*
	December	...	...	1,885,000
1922	June	...	...	1,468,000
	December	...	...	1,382,000
1923	June	...	...	1,223,000
	December	...	...	1,286,000
1924	June	...	...	1,009,000
	December	...	...	1,274,000
1925	June	...	...	1,304,000
	December	...	...	1,102,000

* Coal stoppage in progress.
(p. 131, "Post-War Banking Policy,"
Reginald McKenna.)

The City Editor of the *Daily Herald*, under the heading, "More Reforms," makes remarks that show how their real concern is for the investors:—

Now let us turn for a moment from contemplation of the Stock Exchange as a factor in an absorbing international situation, to consider how this re-opening on Saturday will affect the ordinary British investor.

It gives him an advantage in that he can buy and sell shares on six days of the week instead of five.

It is but one reform out of many which must be accomplished before the Stock Exchange can really claim to provide an adequate service for the ordinary investor, or can take the place it should in national life as a great institution, assisting sound industrial enterprises to obtain capital and to develop along lines which will improve our trade and set to work the millions of unemployed who can find no demand for their services.

The above "Reform" is surely a treasure, and the workers who have received wage cuts and those who will be thrown out by the economy programme agreed to by the Labour Cabinet, backed by the *Herald*, will know what to do with their surplus cash!

As we are preparing this issue for the press, we see that Mr. Henderson offered no opposition to the passage of the Gold Standard Bill and that there is a prospect of the Labour Party joining the National Government—possibly their hearts are aching for the lost prestige and positions.

However, to return to the Gold Standard. According to the *Daily Express* on Monday, September 21st,

Nothing more heartening has happened for years.

THE FOUNDING OF THE SOCIALIST PARTY.

(continued from September Issue)

Correction.—The word "uncompromising" in the last line but one of the first instalment of this article, should have been "compromising." See September issue, page 3.

After the return of the delegates from the Burnley Conference, a meeting of London members of the S.D.F. was held on Sunday, April 24th, 1904, at Shoreditch Town Hall, to discuss the expulsions and matters arising therefrom. On the plea that they were no longer members of the organisation, Fitzgerald and Hawkins were excluded from the hall.

At this meeting there were two surprises: Jack Jones—now a Labour M.P.—who all through had given indications of supporting the so-called "Impossibilists," backed down and supported the official group; Jack Kent, who was thought to be hand-in-glove with the Executive (of which he had been a member), gave the game away and told of the machinations to get rid of the more dangerous of the critics.

After several hours of heated discussion, the meeting supported the official attitude by a vote of 119 to 83.

The small group that had been working by means of economics classes, circulars, and discussions, in the endeavour to convince the members of the necessity of class-conscious revolutionary political action, saw that the position was hopeless. As the S.L.P. was also in the mire, the only way left was to form an independent political party.

Closely following the Shoreditch meeting, a Protest Committee was formed, which issued a leaflet setting forth the grounds of dissatisfaction with the existing policy of the S.D.F. and was signed by 88 members, though some of these had in the meantime been summarily expelled by the Executive for protesting.

Summarised, the criticisms and proposals were as follows:—

The expulsions were an attempt to gag or expel members who had been bold enough to criticise inside the organisation the policy pursued by representative men and more particularly by the late Executive of the S.D.F.

The fact remains that at last we are rid of the gold standard—rid of it for good and all.

It is the end of the gold standard and the beginning of real recovery.

The *Evening Standard* for the same day echoes these sentiments:—

We are now free of the yoke of France and America. We are not tied to an illusory symbol of wealth; we stand firmly in the fundamental strength of our position as a great trading and manufacturing nation. And we look confidently to the future.

For what does this mean? It means a decline in imports and a corresponding boom in the great exporting trades, such as cotton and iron and steel.

When the workers commence to pay higher prices for food with lower wages, they will not share this view. For, like other attempted solutions for economic troubles, it is a move in favour of a section of the capitalists, leaving the workers where they were before—in a condition that is steadily worsening. Taking the situation at its best, according to the advocates of abandoning the Gold Standard, the increase in exports will be offset by an increase in the prices of imports and home products, thus leaving matters where they were, but re-shuffling the positions of commercial concerns.

It will be remembered by those who read it, that the Macmillan Report on Finance and Industry recommended raising prices approximately to the 1928 level as an alternative to the lowering of wages. Mr. Bevin, a member of the Committee, agreed with this policy.

The illusion that lack of gold has anything to do with the main problems is easily dispelled. America has nearly a thousand million pounds in gold in its reserves and is the great creditor nation. Yet America has been, and still is, suffering severely from economic crises, and has an unemployed army in the neighbourhood of ten millions. France has a gold reserve of nearly five hundred millions, a regular revenue, in gold or gold marks of £50 millions from Germany, and a flourishing export trade. Yet France is already in the midst of a crisis and has an unemployed army well over a million, and the numbers are rapidly growing.

These facts prove that a gold reserve is no guarantee of internal harmony or increasing employment for workers; and that, with or without a gold reserve, on or off the Gold Standard, the workers are, in the long run, no better off.

It was a question of determining whether the tactics and policy in future should interpret Socialist principles, or whether the Party was prepared to resort to measures that would tend to sterilise the Socialist propaganda of past years of plodding exertion and self-sacrifice.

The protestors do not believe in impossible political tactics, but assert that political action must be such as to awaken the workers of this country to full class-consciousness, and to the desire to abolish wage-slavery. They therefore feel the necessity of avoiding any action that would endanger or obliterate their Socialist identity or allow them to be swallowed up by a labour movement that has yet to learn the real meaning of a class struggle.

The policy of permeating the Trade Unions had resulted in prominent members getting official jobs that precluded them preaching the class struggle. The policy adopted of voting Tory to dish the Liberals, and *vice-versa*, confused the workers and rendered propaganda difficult.

The basis of the Party was undemocratic. It had been dominated for years by certain leaders over whom there was no real or effective control. The final clothing of the Executive with autocratic authority to expel without appeal showed it was no longer an administrative body, but, according to rules which can only be revised every three years, it is empowered to decide and entirely control the electoral policy of the Party. A man in his capacity of a Trade Union official is allowed to do what would render other members liable to expulsion.

The Party has neither ownership nor control of the Party organ, *Justice*, which was mortgaged to the Trade Unions. The Party was called upon to officially endorse candidatures of non-Socialist Trade Unionists. Questions of policy could be, and were, decided in secret. Conference amendments on serious questions of organisation were not even discussed.

Opposition to the official policy was denied free expression, and members were called upon to apologise for actions of which they were not guilty and which only existed in the imagination of their accusers, the climax of which was the unconstitutional manner of the expulsion of Fitzgerald and Hawkins. Many of those who voted for the expulsions did so in direct contravention of their instruc-

tions to vote for these members in the election to the new Executive. All who voted for the expulsions did so without any instruction whatsoever, thus violating the rules of the S.D.F. The vague charges made against the two members were only put forward to cover the intentions of the old clique to get rid of those who wanted the Party to adopt an uncompromising revolutionary policy, and were carrying on the agitation quite constitutionally within the organisation.

The signatories to the leaflet then urged:—

The adoption of an uncompromising attitude which admits of no arrangements with any section of the capitalist party; nor permits any compromise with any individual or party not recognising the class war as a basic principle, and not prepared to work for the overthrow of the present capitalist system. Opposition to all who are not openly and avowedly working for the realisation of Social Democracy. A remodelled organisation, wherein the Executive shall be mainly an administrative body, the policy and tactics to be determined and controlled by the entire organisation. The Party Organ to be owned, controlled and run by the Party. The individual member to have the right to claim protection of the whole organisation against tyrannical decisions.

Such was the position put forward by those who eventually founded the Socialist Party of Great Britain. Subsequent events made plain the correctness of the view of these pioneers. The Party they sought to clarify and were finally compelled to leave in disgust was afterwards swallowed up in the opportunist movement, and on the outbreak of war in 1914 sided with the capitalists and helped to drive English working men to slaughter their German brethren on the battlefields in the interests of the capitalists. Leading members of it, through the Labour party, became capitalist Cabinet Ministers, and it has finally taken its place as a warning and a lesson to working men of the fate reserved for those who give adherence to numbers in place of clarity of thought.

After the issue of the above-mentioned leaflet, events moved rapidly. The autocratic official group continued their expulsions from the S.D.F. A meeting of sympathisers with the policy outlined in the leaflet was held at Sidney Hall, Battersea,

on May 15th, 1904, and at that meeting it was decided to launch a Party based upon Socialist principles and opposed to all other political parties. A meeting to formally constitute the Party was held at the Painters' Hall, Bartlett's Passage, Fetter Lane, E.C., on Sunday, June 12th, 1904. Such was the formation of the Socialist Party of Great Britain.

The new Party was forced into existence without literature, offices, printing facilities or funds, apart from the contributions of the 120 members who took part in its formation. Its early Executive meetings were held in the bedroom of one of the members, his bed providing the main seating accommodation. However, they entered with enthusiasm and energy into the work of building up an organisation, and, with considerable personal sacrifice, had the satisfaction of seeing the first number of THE SOCIALIST STANDARD appear on September 3rd, 1904, containing on its seventh page the Object and Declaration of Principles that has guided the Party ever since.

The first Annual Conference was held at the Communist Club (now defunct), 107, Charlotte Street, London, on April 29th, 1905. The membership had by then reached 150.

From its formation the Party has been controlled entirely by its members, and many lengthy and stimulating discussions have been held on questions of policy and detail work. All its meetings and discussions, apart from the period of martial law during the War, have been open to any who cared to attend and listen.

The soundness of the Party's principles as a sheet anchor was particularly demonstrated on the outbreak of the War in 1914. While all the other alleged working-class parties (including the Socialist Labour Party) were entirely at sea as to what line to follow, and were gradually consumed by the war fever, the S.P.G.B., from the declaration of war to the armistice, never deviated from opposition to it as a capitalist war involving no interest worth the shedding of a single drop of working-class blood, and laying it down as a principle that any man who voluntarily joined the Army was unworthy of membership of a Socialist Party. The September, 1914, issue of THE SOCIALIST STANDARD contained our War Manifesto, and subsequent issues, brought out under

overwhelming difficulties and in spite of Governmental raids on the Central Office, continued to oppose the War as no concern of the workers of any country. As far as our knowledge goes, it was alone in the belligerent countries in taking up that stand.

The result of this policy brought devastation for a time. Its members were scattered and some of them were hunted over the world. A good deal of the work at the Head Office was done by women members who ably carried out work the men were precluded from doing. When the Armistice enabled the members to gather together once more, it was a much-decimated Party that emerged. But, in spite of the knocks it had received, the Party was sound, and the members proceeded with enthusiasm to rebuild the broken organisation, with such good results that it is now stronger and more firmly established than ever and has been the means of developing young organisations on a similar basis in other countries.

In the foregoing way was built up the organisation that is now attracting more and more of those who give serious thought to the problems that confront the working class. GILMAC.

SHEFFIELD

PUBLIC MEETINGS will be held at the
TRADES HALL (ROOM 6)
CHARLES STREET

Subject	Speaker
Wednesday, Oct. 28th	A. SCOTT
"The Bolshevik Regime"	
Wednesday, Nov. 25th	B. OSBORNE
"The Principles of Socialism"	
Wednesday, Dec. 23rd	J. HORNER
"Trade Unions and the Socialist Party"	
Wednesday, January 27th, 1932	E. BODEN
"Unemployment"	

Admission free. Non-members invited. Questions and Discussion. Commence 7.30 p.m.

THE SOCIALIST PARTY OF AUSTRALIA.

Readers in Australia are invited to communicate with the Socialist Party of Australia at Box 1440, P.O., Elizabeth St., Melbourne.

A Socialist Searchlight.

MR. MAXTON GIVES A DATE.

Mr. Maxton, M.P., under the false impression that it is a Marxian theory, has for years been prophesying the sudden and irretrievable collapse of capitalism. He has now given it a date. In a speech at Cowcaddens, reported in the *Daily Record* (August 22nd) and reprinted in *Forward* (September 12th), he said:—

I am perfectly satisfied that the great capitalist system that has endured for 150 years in its modern form, declared Mr. James Maxton, M.P., in the Cowcaddens Ward, Glasgow, last night, is now at the stage of final collapse, and not all the devices of the statesmen, not all the three party conferences, not all the collaboration between the leaders, can prevent the system from coming down with one unholy crash.

They may postpone the collapse for a month, two months, three months, six months," he cried, forefinger pointing at his audience, and body crouched, "but collapse is sure and certain."

Six months from August 22nd brings us to February, 1932. When that comes round, we will ask Mr. Maxton for his explanation.

Another exponent of the collapse theory, Mr. Walton Newbold, has suffered a strange transformation. In 1921, as a Communist, he prophesied imminent collapse, and was doing his utmost, so he said, to hasten it. It did not come off, and Mr. Newbold, now in the Labour Party, is on this occasion rallying round MacDonald and Thomas to prop capitalism up again!

LETTERS TO MR. HICKS.

Mr. George Hicks, M.P., was asked for his comments on the letter of personal explanation which Mr. MacDonald sent to each of the Labour Party M.P.'s. Mr. Hicks sneeringly replied that it was just the sort of letter he would expect from a man like Mr. MacDonald.

Mr. Hicks was not always so minded about letters from that quarter. As recently as April of this year (see *The Times*, April 11th), when Mr. Hicks was Labour Party candidate at East Woolwich, he published a broadsheet called the *George Hicks Herald*, containing the letter sent by MacDonald, assuring the electors that Mr. Hicks is the sort of man MacDonald regarded as suitable to represent the workers of Woolwich.

THE COMMUNIST-I.L.P. ALLIANCE.

The crisis has had the effect of throwing together the two reformist bodies, the I.L.P. and the Communist Party. On Sunday, September 6th, Communist and I.L.P. speakers addressed a joint demonstration in Hyde Park, speaking from the same platform. The Secretary of the Balham and Tooting I.L.P., in a letter, to the *New Leader* (September 11th), described it as "a glorious sight to see a demonstration in Hyde Park in which both Parties were united." This was just a week after the majority of the I.L.P. Labour M.P.'s had voted for the election of Mr. Henderson as leader of the Labour Party in place of Mr. MacDonald. Only five votes were cast against his election (*Daily Express*, August 29th). One of those who voted for Mr. Henderson was Mr. J. Beckett, M.P., and it was Mr. Beckett who was the star turn at the Hyde Park demonstration, although Mr. Beckett complained that Communists in his audience hurled abuse at the I.L.P. speakers. Mr. Beckett was so anxious not to have it thought that he voted against Henderson, that he had the *Daily Express* (August 31st) publish a correction of their statement including him among the five.

WE NEED YOUR HELP.

Do not forget that we need donations to enable us to carry on our work for Socialism. Send to the Treasurer at 42, Great Dover Street, London, S.E.1. A list of donations to date is published below:—

Canadian, 2s.; T.J.H., £1; E. Boyle, 2s. 6d.; Childs, 5s.; McKay, 5s.; Reed, 1s.; West Ham Branch, £5; Watford, £1 7s.; Straws, 6d.; G.P.G., 3s.; F.H.B., 2s. 6d.; Flanagan, 10s.; N. V. Staples, 5s.; Geeson, 2s. 6d.; Milbourne, 2s. 6d.; W.A.B., 11d.; Battersea Branch, £2; H. S. Barnett, 1s.; J. Clark, 3s.; Watford Branch, 10s.; Geeson, 2s. 6d.; Johnson, 1s.; G.P.G., 3s.; H.E.H., £2; A. F. Fisher, 2s. 6d.; R. Franklin, 2s.; M.M., 1s.; Battersea Branch, 10s.; W.H., 2s. 6d.; Syrup, 2s. 6d.; K.G., 2s. 6d.; Elmer, £1; G.P.G., 3s.; Hull Branch, 10s. 6d.; C. Reid, 1s. 3d.; Milbourne, 5s.; A. Williams, 1s.; Haggett, 1s. 2d.; A. Burston, 2s. 6d.; W. Barrett, 2s.; J. M. Larcombe, 15s. 4d.; Hull Branch, £1 5s.; E.H.W., 9s. 6d.; F. G. Willemsen, 2s.—Total, £20 11s. 2d.

HOW TO GET TO HEAD OFFICE.

Great Dover Street is a turning out of Borough High Street, near Borough (Underground) Station. The station is on the line from Morden to Hampstead and Highgate, and lies between the Bank Station and Elephant and Castle.

THE SOCIALIST FORUM.

ARE THE WORKERS ROBBED?

A correspondent ("Jason," Balham) questions the accuracy of the statement that the workers are "robbed." He refers particularly to three phrases used by us. The first was used in the War Manifesto reprinted in the August issue, and is as follows:—

... the workers' interests are not bound up in the struggle for markets wherein their masters may dispose of the wealth they have stolen from them (the workers) ...

Our correspondent objects that this statement is not derived from Marx and is not correct. He writes:—

When Marx refers to the capitalists as the robber class he has in mind the original source of their capital—the primary accumulation obtained from robbing the Spaniards and Portuguese of their loot from Mexico, Peru and the Malay Archipelago, plundering Africa and the Indies, and expropriating the peasants, etc.

It is palpably absurd to talk of the workers as propertyless proletarians and then to dilate upon the magnitude of the robbery of non-existent wealth from them. At the most the workers can be robbed only within the compass of their wages, insurance money, or loans, but such robbery enriches only a section of the Capitalist Class, operating in the sphere of circulation, and may be termed cheating rather than robbery.

The process by which the capitalists augment their wealth is a process far more deadly than any mere robbery could be. It is a draining, pumping, sucking, squeezing, of labour-power, not stealing the worker's wealth, but rather his health and vitality, by the purchase at its value of the energy derived through the expenditure of brain, muscle, nerve and bone tissue. Workers are poor not because they are robbed, but because they are enslaved.

Our correspondent considers that the phrase in our Declaration of Principles which reads, "the monopoly by the capitalist class of the wealth taken from the workers," "tends to foster the ... erroneous viewpoint." He expresses the opinion that a third phrase used in the article, "The Socialist Party and War" (see August issue), viz., "robbing them of the fruits of their labour," is "more correct."

REPLY.

The capitalist buys labour power at its value, yet robs the worker. The value of labour power depends upon the cost of production of the labourer, and the cost of production of the labourer depends upon his cost of living. Inside this, however, is the fact that standards of living for

different types of workers vary, and standards also vary between one country and another. The capitalist aims at lowering the general standard of living to the lowest possible level.

The labourer, when working, produces a greater value than the value of his means of living, and the capitalist takes the extra value produced. Our correspondent argues that this is exploitation, but not robbery, because the capitalist pays the labourer the value of his labour-power. In his eyes, only that which is illegal to-day is robbery. But although the capitalist pays the labourer the value of his labour-power, he does not pay him the value of his product.

We will leave aside the question of depressing the standard of living, wherein the capitalist obviously robs the worker of former advantages. It is to be assumed that the critic does not suggest the worker willingly agrees to wage reductions, etc. As the worker is deprived of wealth that he does not willingly give, he is plundered by force.

The workers fight for a larger amount of the total wealth produced, but are defeated in the long run by the power of the capitalists. The capitalist shows his power by the giving and withholding of jobs, which signifies inviting the workers to produce on certain terms or starve. Dick Turpin used a pistol to force wealth from his victims; the capitalist uses the threat of starvation for the same purpose. The one method is illegal robbery; the other is legal robbery. In the present discussion the main difference between the two is the question of legality. There is another difference. Dick Turpin did the job himself; the capitalist pays others to do it. When Dick Turpin met with opposition he had only his own arms to call upon. When the worker resists the capitalist, the latter can call upon the State power to bring the worker to subjection and force him to produce.

The difficulty is that the mass of the workers, like the victims of Hatry, do not realise that they are being robbed.

The original accumulation of the capitalists, by means of which they were able to obtain control of the means of production and subject the worker to exploitation, was also robbery. The plundering of the Eastern and Western countries, the plundering of the monasteries and the enclosing of lands by driving the

original owners off, form the principal part of the capitalists' early accumulation of wealth.

Dr. Annandale gives the following definitions in his dictionary:—

Rob: To plunder or strip by force or violence; to deprive of something by stealing. Robbery: A taking away by violence or wrong. Steal: To take clandestinely without right or leave; to gain or win by address or gradual and imperceptible means; to perform secretly; to try to accomplish clandestinely.

The capitalist deprives, plunders and strips the worker of energy, leisure, pleasure, the product of his labour, and a host of other things, and it is done by force, and secretly or clandestinely by gradual and imperceptible means. Therefore the capitalist robs the worker. The customs of savage society do not permit this form of robbery, but the laws of capitalist society do. Therefore it is now legal robbery.

It is true the capitalists rob each other, but the robbery of the worker is the basis of the system.

As to our critic's references to robbery in the past, we would point out that from the strictly legal point of view it would in many instances be as incorrect to apply the word to the past as to the present. The enclosures of common lands, for example, were perfectly legal forms of robbery, according to the laws of the time.

ED. COMM.

SHOULD SOCIALISTS COMPROMISE?

In the September issue we dealt with the question, put by a prospective Labour Party candidate for a seat on the Grimsby Town Council, as to what a Socialist should do in that position. In brief, the question was, Should a Socialist member of a minority group be uncompromising or should he compromise with the majority? In our reply we pointed out that the vital point is the character of the electorate. This determines the manner in which the successful candidate gets on to the Council, and it determines the part he can play when elected. If the electorate is composed of non-Socialists, then the successful candidate has to satisfy their desires by undertaking to carry out a non-Socialist policy. We do not believe that persons so elected can do anything to further Socialism. We

added that we have no doubt that the great majority of the electors in Grimsby are non-Socialists.

A reader (J. R. Foskett, Muswell Hill) objects to our reply on the ground that it avoids answering the question by assuming that the candidate in Grimsby must be elected by non-Socialist votes. Mr. Foskett points out the possibility that one Ward may have a Socialist majority even although Grimsby as a whole is non-Socialist.

What Mr. Foskett completely ignores is the further statement contained in our reply to Mr. Matt Quinn, of Grimsby. We asked Mr. Quinn for a copy of the election address with which he proposed to seek the votes of the electors. The contents of that address would demonstrate without any possibility of doubt whether Mr. Quinn thinks that the electors are Socialist or not. Mr. Quinn declined to provide that information. This, in conjunction with the fact that Mr. Quinn, while professing to be a Socialist, is nevertheless a member of the Labour Party, gives us reasonable ground for assuming that the electors there are not Socialist, that Mr. Quinn knows they are not Socialist, and that Mr. Quinn is prepared to seek election on a non-Socialist programme. It is interesting to notice that while Mr. Foskett and other readers have intervened to suggest that perhaps the electors there are Socialist, Mr. Quinn himself did not say so in his original letter and has not come forward to correct us. If they were Socialist, it is obvious that they would never elect a member of the Labour Party to represent them.

Mr. Foskett and another reader ("No-Compromise," Leicester) then go on to put a further question as to what a Socialist would do if elected as one of a minority group, put there by Socialist votes on a Socialist programme.

This raises an entirely different issue. The non-Socialist elected by non-Socialists is offering to work for certain reforms of capitalism, on behalf of electors who do not want capitalism abolished. As capitalism rests upon the exploitation of the workers, no reforms of capitalism can ever solve the workers' problems. They will constantly press their representatives to work and vote for old and new reforms, but not for Socialism until they become Socialists.

The electorate of Socialists, on the con-

trary, will not be under the illusion that their problems can be solved within the framework of capitalism. They will be aware moreover that Socialism pre-supposes a Socialist majority here and in other countries and also pre-supposes the conquest of the central machinery of Government, including the armed forces. They will appreciate the importance of controlling the machinery of local government, in addition to controlling the Central Government from which local powers are derived, but they will not imagine that problems whose scope is international can be solved locally. They will not permit their Socialist Councillors to compromise, i.e., make concessions to non-Socialist groups or parties. The object of the Socialist Party is to get Socialism. How, then, could it make concessions to those whose primary object is to oppose Socialism and maintain Capitalism?

To Socialists, the need of controlling the local councils in order to supplement the control of the central machinery of government would be a predominating issue, locally as well as nationally. The using of minority representation or the control of some local councils, to the limited extent possible, as a means of defending the workers' position under Capitalism, is the main question to non-Socialists; to Socialists it would be a minor one.

Socialist councillors would be required by their electors to determine their policy in accordance with the chief issue, thus ruling out compromise on grounds of expediency as well as on grounds of principle.

ED. COMM.

MR. BROMLEY DAY BY DAY.

Mr. J. Bromley, M.P., General Secretary of the Associated Society of Locomotive Engineers and Firemen, was a member of the Civil Service Royal Commission. He signed its report, published in July, recommending rates of pay which, for the lower grades, represented a reduction of about 9 per cent. on the rates ruling when the Commission began its investigation. Mr. Bromley also concurred in rejecting the Post Office workers' demand for their hours to be reduced from 48 to 40.

Early in September, Mr. Bromley was among his fellow Trade Union officials at the Trades Union Congress. On September 6th he addressed a demonstration and

"ridiculed talk of equality of sacrifice as an excuse for wage cuts" (*Daily Herald*, September 7th.)

Two days later he seconded a resolution on the floor of the Congress demanding a maximum working week of 40 hours. (*Daily Herald*, September 9th.)

* * *

Do not, however, make the mistake of thinking that Mr. Bromley is not a real fighting man. A week later he made the alarming discovery that the child elected as this year's "Railway Queen" for a carnival was the daughter of a non-Trade Unionist. Here was a really vital question, and Mr. Bromley did not fail us. Unable (or unwilling?) to stand up against his fellow-members on the Civil Service Royal Commission, Mr. Bromley, M.P., "supported by Mr. C. T. Cramp, secretary of the N.U.R., and Mr. A. J. Walkden, M.P., secretary of the Railway Clerks' Association," declared that he "cannot be associated with a non-unionist who, after deserting his fellows in the railway service, tries to take advantage of their work in this connection just as he has in the conditions of service which he enjoys" (*The Times*, September 19th). So Mr. Bromley showed Miss Patricia Eileen Annie Clark, aged 13, what Trade Union officials are made of.

What would the workers (and the employers) do without the Labour leaders? H.

S.P.G.B. PROPAGANDA MEETINGS

LONDON DISTRICT.	
Sunday ...	Tottenham, West Green Corner, 11.30 a.m. Victoria Park, 11.30 a.m. and 3.30 p.m. Walworth, Liverpool Street, 11.30 a.m. Finsbury Park, 3.30 p.m. Clapham Common, 3 p.m. Cock Hotel, East Ham, 7.30 p.m. Prince of Wales, Harrow Road, 11.30 a.m. and 7.30 p.m. Battersea, Princes Head, 11.30 a.m. Stamford Hill (near Regent's Theatre), 8 p.m.
Monday ...	Ridley Road, Dalston, E.8., 8 p.m.
Wednesday ...	The Fountain, Forest Gate Station, 8 p.m. Prince of Wales, Paddington, 8 p.m. Stepney Green, E., 8 p.m.
Thursday ...	Prince of Wales, Harrow Road, 8 p.m. Kenninghall Road, Clapton, E., 8 p.m.
Friday ...	Vallance Road, E., 8 p.m. Mossbury Road, Battersea, S.W., 8 p.m. Prince of Wales, Paddington, 8 p.m.
Saturday ...	Jolly Butchers Hill, Wood Green, 8 p.m. Stamford Hill (near Regent's Theatre), 8 p.m.
GLASGOW DISTRICT	
Sunday ...	West Regent Street, 8 p.m.
Monday ...	Vulcan Street, Springburn, 8 p.m.
Wednesday ...	Abbey Close, Paisley Cross, 8 p.m.
Thursday ...	Raeberry Street, Maryhill, 8 p.m.

BRANCH DIRECTORY.

- BATTERSEA**.—Sec., 2 Hanbury Road, S.W.11. Branch meets Thursday, 8.30 p.m. at The Waiting Room, Latchmere Baths, entrance in Burns Road. Discussion second Thursday in month.
- BECONTREE**.—Sec., Hy. Gratton, 4, Drummond Ave., Brooklands, Romford. Branch meets 1st and 3rd Wednesdays at 7.30, at above address.
- BIRMINGHAM**.—Sec., E. Jesper, 32, Rollason-rd., Erdington. Branch meets Hill Top Café, 197, Spring Hill, 1st Sunday in month at 11 a.m.
- CENTRAL**.—Membership obtained only through the Ex. Committee. Applications to General Sec.
- EAST LONDON**.—Sec. W. Reynolds, 57, Weymouth Terrace, Hackney Rd. Branch meets every Thursday, at 7.30 p.m., at Limehouse Library (Committee Room), Commercial Road, E. Lectures on alternate Thursdays. Public invited.
- GLASGOW**.—Branch meets 2nd and 4th Fridays in month 8 p.m., at 118, Henderson Street, Glasgow, S.1. Sec., A. Shaw.
- HACKNEY**.—Branch meets Arcadian Cafe, 42, Amherst Road, Hackney, 1st and 3rd Fridays in month, 8 p.m., Discussions 9.30. Communication to Sec. at 21 Bridge Street, Homerton, E. 9.
- HULL**.—Branch meets 1st and 3rd Wednesdays in month at 15, Grosvenor Street, Beverley Road. Communications to M. V. Coupland at above address.
- ISLINGTON**.—All communications to N. A. Bishop, 39, Poynings Road, Highgate, N.19.
- LEYTON**.—Communications to Sec., 8 Cheltenham Road, E.10.
- MANCHESTER**.—Sec., D. White, 91, Rochdale Road, Middleton. Branch meets 2nd and 4th Mondays in month at 8.15 p.m., at Room 2, 183, Oxford Road, All Saints.
- PADDINGTON**.—Branch meeting held on alternate Wednesdays, 8 p.m., at 430 Harrow Road, W.9.
- SHEFFIELD**.—Branch meets 2nd and 4th Wednesdays 7.30 p.m., Room 5, Trades Hall, Charles Street. Public discussion after business. Secretary E. Boden, 74, Glenalmond Road.
- SOUTHEND-ON-SEA**.—Sec., J. Bird, 5, Welling-ton-avenue, Westcliffe-on-Sea.
- SOUTHWARK**.—Branch meets Fridays at 8 p.m., 42, Great Dover Street, S.E.1. Communications to Sec., at above address.
- TOOTING**.—Branch meets on alternate Wednesdays at "Labour Centre," 126, Upper Tooting Road. Secretary, W. MEHEW, 19, Littleton Street, S.W.18.
- TOTTENHAM**.—Secretary, 18, Woodlands Park Rd., N.15. Branch meets 1st and 3rd Fridays each month, Room 2, Trades Hall, 7, Bruce Grove. Discussion after branch business. Public invited.
- WALTHAMSTOW**.—Sec. S. E. Williams, 64, Bloxhall-rd., Leyton, E.10. Branch meets at Workmen's Hall, High-st., 2nd and 4th Mondays each month.
- WATFORD**.—A. Lawson, Sec., 107, Kensington-avenue, Watford. Branch meets Mondays at 8.30 p.m. at Secretary's address.
- WEST HAM**.—Branch meets Thursdays at 8 p.m. at 167, Romford-rd., Stratford. Sec., P. Hallard, 22, Colegrave-rd., Stratford, E.

WOOD GREEN.—All communications to Sec., F. W. Godfrey, 28, Russell Road, Palmers Green, N.13. Branch meets 2nd and 4th Wednesday in month at 8.30 p.m. at Stirling House, Stuart Crescent.

THE SOCIALIST PARTY OF GREAT BRITAIN.

OBJECT.—The establishment of a system of society based upon the common ownership and democratic control of the means and instruments for producing and distributing wealth by and in the interests of the whole community.

DECLARATION OF PRINCIPLES.

THE SOCIALIST PARTY of Great Britain HOLDS—

That society as at present constituted is based upon the ownership of the means of living (i.e., lands, factories, railways, etc.) by the capitalist or master class, and the consequent enslavement of the working class by whose labour alone wealth is produced.

That in society, therefore, there is an antagonism of interests, manifesting itself as a class struggle, between those who possess but do not produce and those who produce but do not possess.

That this antagonism can be abolished only by the emancipation of the working class from the domination of the master class, by the conversion into the common property of society of the means of production and distribution, and their democratic control by the whole people.

That as in the order of social evolution the working class is the last class to achieve its freedom, the emancipation of the working class will involve the emancipation of all mankind, without distinction of race or sex.

That this emancipation must be the work of the working class itself.

That as the machinery of government, including the armed forces of the nation, exists only to conserve the monopoly by the capitalist class of the wealth taken from the workers, the working class must organise consciously and politically for the conquest of the powers of government, national and local, in order that this machinery, including these forces, may be converted from an instrument of oppression into the agent of emancipation and the overthrow of privilege, aristocratic and plutocratic.

That as political parties are but the expression of class interests, and as the interest of the working class is diametrically opposed to the interests of all sections of the master class, the party seeking working-class emancipation must be hostile to every other party.

THE SOCIALIST PARTY of Great Britain, therefore, enters the field of political action determined to wage war against all other political parties, whether alleged labour or avowedly capitalist, and calls upon the members of the working class of this country to muster under its banner to the end that a speedy termination may be wrought to the system which deprives them of the fruits of their labour, and that poverty may give place to comfort, privilege to equality, and slavery to freedom.

Those agreeing with the above principles and desiring enrolment in the Party should apply for membership form to secretary of nearest branch or at Head Office.

THE Socialist Standard

The Official Organ of **THE SOCIALIST PARTY** of Great Britain.

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LONDON, NOVEMBER, 1931

[MONTHLY, TWOPENCE.

DO WE NEED A FIVE-YEAR PLAN?

THE PRACTICAL IMPORTANCE OF THEORY.

It is no uncommon thing for Socialists to be met with the charge that they are only mystics, airy philosophers destitute of any practical notions of how to carry on the society which they propose to establish. The present writer readily confesses to having been struck dumb in his youth by a querulous critic who demanded to know, "Who is going to get the best joints of meat under Socialism?" and proceeded to hint darkly at the possible fate, under such a system, of obstinate wives who refused to sleep with their husbands. What struck me dumb was my amazement that such questions should seriously worry one whose choice of the food he consumed at cheap restaurants during the week was practically nil, and who, as a result of his closely-confined occupation, looked as capable of healthy sex relationships as of knocking out Carnera.

The charge of mysticism was recently made against Socialists by a contributor to a discussion on the Russian Five-Year Plan in the economics section of the British Association Conference. The suggestion is not new. Max Eastman made it in his "Marx, Lenin and Revolution." H. G. Wells put it forward in the first volume of "William Clissold"; and Marx himself had to meet similar attempts at criticism after the publication of his work on "Capital." His reply to this is contained in his preface to the second edition.

Marx owed a debt to the German philosopher, Hegel, which he readily admitted; but he frankly abandoned Hegel's idealistic standpoint and treated material conditions as the real basis of human society. He saw that these conditions changed and new forms

of society arose as a result. He criticised capitalist society from this point of view, and demonstrated that it must give way to Socialism; but he never spent his time in mystical contemplation of the future. He left to others the task of writing out the menus for the Utopian equivalent of Lyons' cafés.

It is, of course, not surprising that this critical and revolutionary attitude fails to appeal to professional builders of "New Worlds for Old." They get their living partly by writing about plans for the future, which are pushed aside by events which they fail to foresee. It is only to be expected that they should fall foul of a scientifically cautious mind, and remain apparently unconscious of the absurdity of denouncing Marx for mysticism in one breath and for failing to act as a prophet in the next. Such critics can be left to stew in their own juice.

Of more concern to us are those of our readers who allow themselves to be impressed by such bombast, and write to us complaining of our "destructive criticism" and our failure to propose "measures of reconstruction." One reader, for example, wants a "Ten Years' Plan formulated now! in order that the workers can be familiarised with Socialism as a practical rather than a theoretical proposition." Our correspondent then proceeds to outline in quite a general way the "immediate measures" he considers necessary, and to propose certain "new departments" of administration, including one of "Co-ordination." This proposal shows how easy it is to allow oneself to be hypnotised by impor-

tant sounding words. Co-ordination is the special function of a general administrative body and not of a department.

The establishment of Socialism is essentially a practical proposition. It is the definite object of the Socialist Party, the goal of our activity. If the workers do not show any enthusiasm for this object that is not because it is "theoretical," but because they do not understand the need for it. They are quite prepared to accept their slave-status (are indeed unaware that they are slaves), and gladly leave planning to their leaders and masters.

The Socialist Party is not in any doubt as to what it has to do when it has conquered political power. Its job will be to convert the means of living into the common property of Society.

To be sure, that is only a brief statement of our "general line," and our critic wants details. To his mind it is shirking the question to suggest that particular measures depend upon particular conditions. "Most of us," he says, "do not like to buy a pig in a poke." Who does he mean by us? Unfortunately the majority of the workers are only too ready to buy a political pig in a poke. Any general election provides ample proof. What political party has ever tied itself down to matters of detail before election? The National Government asks for a "free hand" and cannot tell us even a month ahead what it proposes to do. Leading members of the Labour Party disagree considerably as to the form their measures of nationalisation or "public control" are going to take.

The Communist Party, it is true, has an elaborately detailed programme—which has not a ghost of a chance of securing political victory for the Communist Party. If the S.P.G.B. is still out in the cold, therefore, it is certainly not because the Party's object is too vague for the practical disposition of the workers.

The political actions of the workers may, as our correspondent suggests, be "more powerfully affected by the emotions than by the intellect," but that does them no good. The people who benefit are the ones who use their intellects to play upon the workers' emotions, i.e., the master class. Our correspondent confesses that his "imagination reels" when he contemplates the possibilities of planning. Can the Socialist Party afford to enter the political arena with a reeling mind? On the contrary, we need all

the concentration of which we are capable to think out the most effective way of getting our "destructive criticism" into the minds of our fellow-workers here and now. They need it.

When they wake up to the fact that they are slaves and that a change in the basis of society is necessary, they will also realise that in future they have got to do the planning as they march along the road to their emancipation. They will not look to leaders to plan for them. On the other hand, there is no necessity for a small minority of the working class (such as the Socialist Party is at the moment) to anticipate the decisions of the majority which it will one day become. Certainly "there is no harm in speculation," so long as it is recognised as such, and so long as the speculators do not attempt to force their speculations upon us as a necessary programme. Discuss, by all means (if and when you have nothing better to do) just what is going to happen in twenty or thirty years' time; but do not forget the fate of the practical programme drawn up by Marx and Engels in the Communist Manifesto eighty-three years ago. In twenty-five years it had, in its authors' own words, become somewhat "antiquated" owing to the rapid pace of industrial development. The pace is even more rapid to-day. That is the main reason why the Socialist Party steers clear of so-called plans and programmes.

A further reason is that outsiders have a fatal knack of confusing a programme which, at its best, can only be a means to an end, with the end itself; or, to put it another way, the "programme" and not the object (i.e., Socialism) occupies first place in their minds. The result can be seen in the fate of the old Social Democratic Parties in this and other countries. Numbers were attracted into these organisations by the immediate programme, the sound Socialist element was swamped, and these parties eventually degenerated into step-ladders for political job-hunters, who in turn operated as tools for the master-class. The preference of the Socialist Party for scientific principles rather than for speculative programmes is thus not a mere foible, it is based upon bitter experience.

No substitute has yet been discovered for Socialist education. It is a slow job and not so exciting or remunerative as that of sweeping the un-class-conscious workers off their feet with stirring "practical measures";

but it has its compensations. There is a certain element of humour in the spectacle of the most practical politicians taking hedges in faultless style, only to land in the mud on the other side. The workers who have prided themselves on their practical commonsense, their superiority to the theorists of the S.P.G.B., are apt to view the situation rather tragically at the moment, having put their savings upon these much-advertised hurdle-jumpers in quite a literal sense. We have confidence that they will recover their balance and treat Socialist principles a little more respectfully in future.

When they have eventually overcome their prejudices in this direction the time will then arrive for practical programmes to take on a new and revolutionary character. Informed with the necessary fundamental knowledge derived from an effort to understand their experience, the workers will address themselves, with much greater energy and immensely superior organisation, to the necessary task of social reconstruction. We may guess at the plans they will make and some of our guesses may turn out to be accurate, but it is more satisfactory and immediately profitable to get on with the job of making Socialists. E. B.

HACKNEY

A LECTURE will be given at
BROTHERHOOD CHURCH,
Southgate Road, N.1.
Thursday, November 5th.

Subject—

SOCIALISM the ELECTION and YOU

Speaker—**H. MILTON.** Chairman—**D. GOLDBERG.**

Admission Free.
Questions and Discussion.

Commence 8 p.m.
All invited.

STEPNEY.

A BRANCH FORMED.

After a year's persistent work by members and sympathisers a branch has been formed at Stepney. The branch meets every Friday at Jay's Café, 100, Christian Street. All are invited. Communications to the Secretary, W. Mays, 99, Oxford Street, Stepney, E.1.

[The announcement that the General Election was to be held came too late for us to publish a statement of our views in the October issue. For the information of new readers and for purposes of record we reproduce below the leaflet which we distributed during the election.]

GENERAL ELECTION, 1931.

You are baffled and confused. You are asked to vote, but you do not know what to do. You have voted before and have waited in vain for results. You had faith in your leaders, and you believed them when they told you that you were on the eve of better days. You have been deceived, not once but many times. Government after government has come and gone, but they have failed to improve your condition. Again and again you have been assured that the remedies were being applied, but all to no purpose. Your pressing problems are still unsolved. When you are in work your health and vitality are sapped by overstrain. The happiness of your dependants is marred by poverty. Your peace of mind is fretted away by the fear that you will be the next to lose your job. You had faith in the integrity of Baldwin, the ability of Lloyd George, or the loyalty of MacDonald. But experience has taught you that none of them can give you what you seek. In the days before the War the Liberals failed utterly to keep their promise to abolish want from this land of plenty. You have had years of suffering under Tory governments. But you reaped your most bitter disillusionment when the Labour Government, instead of easing, aggravated your distress. You then realised that the Labour leaders and the Labour Party are no better than their predecessors. Now you are getting mistrustful of parties and politicians. In your disappointment you ask whether there is any road left that is worth travelling.

THE PROBLEM STATED.

There is no lack of statesmen, journalists, and business men telling you the cause of your troubles. But their explanations do not ring true. They tell you things that in your own knowledge and observation you recognise to be false. You have lived under Free Trade and you know that it does not mean "peace and plenty." You or your parents can recall the pitiable poverty of the years before the War. You can assert, therefore, that the workers' troubles did not begin with the War and the War debts.

You have read of the huge armies of unemployed in the tariff countries such as Germany and the United States. You have been told that industrial efficiency and rationalisation are the cure for unemployment and low wages; but your own experience teaches you that "labour-saving" machinery does not give you ease and prosperity. Again, during recent weeks, you have been asked to believe that "going off the gold standard" will bring you relief. But when you recall the wage-reductions, the trade disputes, and the heavy unemployment of the years between the Armistice and 1925—years when, we are told, we were "off the gold standard"—you will see through that deception. You must go more deeply into the question if you wish to understand what is wrong. There is something rotten at the root of things. It is that the greater number of us have no "stake in the land of our birth." In this country that we call ours, the fields, the factories and workshops in which we toil, the railways and steamships, even the places of amusement and recreation, are not ours at all. They do not belong to the workers who constructed them and work them. Nor do they belong to society as a whole. They are—stop and consider the importance of this—they are private property under the private control of a small class of people. Because of that our lives are not our own. We produce wealth for others. We produce it in abundance so that the world groans under the burden of what is called overproduction. But all that we get out of industry is a wage just sufficient to provide a working-class family with the cheapest food, cramped quarters, and the least attractive clothes. After paying all the expenses of production, the goods left in the hands of the propertied class are in quantities so vast that they cannot all be disposed of at a profit. The workers have not the money to buy more than a modest amount, and the rich, living in luxury, yet spend only part of their enormous incomes. The result is stagnant trade, closed factories, idle shipping, abandoned mines, neglected farms, and everywhere strife and instability. For millions the consequence is semi-starvation and unemployment.

There is only one remedy for this chaotic and avoidable state of affairs. The means by which we all live must belong to society as a whole; to be used and controlled democratically for the common good. Produc-

tion for use, not for the profit of a propertied class.

THE LABOUR PARTY IS NOT A SOCIALIST PARTY.

One popular error must be corrected at this point. Nationalisation, or State-controlled capitalism is not Socialism. The Labour Party is not a Socialist Party. Whether in this country or abroad Labour Governments have always and everywhere failed to justify themselves. In the 1929 General Election the Labour Party roused your hopes with promises of better times. In office they did not redeem their promise. On the contrary they brought ridicule upon themselves and destroyed the enthusiasm of their supporters. Propped up on Liberal votes in the House of Commons, for two years they staggered from one political crisis to another. Reluctant to give up office they prolonged the miserable life of their Ministry by secret bargaining with the Liberal Party. Instead of using Parliament as an arena in which to wage a fight for the workers, they earned by their spineless conduct the contemptuous sneer of Winston Churchill that there was "no fight" in progress, "only a lot of politicians leaning up against each other."

In the present election the Labour Party have the support of the notorious anti-socialist, Mr. Lloyd George; again showing that they do not intend any fundamental social change. Mr. Henderson had a private meeting with the Liberal leader on Saturday, October 10th ("Reynolds's," October 11th), and the Carnarvon Boroughs Labour Party has decided not to oppose his candidature.

The "Daily Herald" (October 10th) says:—

"Mr. Lloyd George's manifesto gives a lead to Liberals to vote Labour."

The Labour Government failed to stop wage reductions in the textile mills, on the railways and farms, and in the co-operative stores. They reduced still further the miserable pittance of their own lower-grade post office and other employees. While they were in control unemployment rose to a record figure. Finally, when there developed one of the periodic crises which are the inevitable outcome of our present social system, they rushed into the economy campaign which the National Government has carried on. Except for the 10 per cent. reduction in unemployment pay, against which a minority of the Labour Cabinet

made a belated stand, the whole of the National Government's economy programme had been agreed to "provisionally" by the Labour Government. In 1929 they promised the workers improved social services; in 1931 they were demanding "sacrifices."

That ignominious collapse was not merely the failure of individuals. It was the Labour Party and its programme which had been tried and found wanting. They claimed to make capitalism run smoothly and in the interests of the workers; but capitalism cannot be made to run smoothly. Socialist policy is the direct opposite. The *Socialist Party of Great Britain* stands for the overthrow of capitalism and the establishment of Socialism. Not to patch or prop up capitalism, but to abolish it.

THE NATIONAL PARTIES—DEFENDERS OF CAPITALISM.

The parties led by Mr. MacDonald stand frankly as defenders of capitalism. They say that they represent the forces of order and stability, and Mr. Snowden has inferred that all those who oppose the National Government are parties of destruction and disorder. That is not true of the Socialist Party. Just as the capitalist parties claim to stand for capitalism, conducted as well as they know how, so the Socialist Party stands for a speedy but ordered change-over to a new system on the basis of common ownership. Mr. MacDonald is asking for a free hand for any measures, including tariffs, that the National Government may decide are necessary. But there are no measures that can solve the problem of the workers except measures to establish Socialism. Do you suppose that the politicians and parties which separately have let you down will serve you better in combination?

THE ROAD TO SOCIALISM.

There can be no Socialism until a majority of the electors have been won over. The workers form the great majority of the population. Organised in the Socialist Party they have but to use their votes in order to place themselves in control of the machinery of government and of the armed forces by which society is dominated. The urgent task of to-day is to spread knowledge of Socialist principles so that the workers may fit themselves for the winning of power and for Socialism. There is no other way. The Labour Party has preached the policy of pleading for social reforms as steps towards Socialism. But recent events have shown

that that road leads only to failure and despair.

To achieve Socialism, elections must be fought, not on a programme of reforms to catch non-socialist votes, as is the practice of the Labour Party, the I.L.P., and Communists, but on the simple, straightforward issue of Socialism versus Capitalism. Beware, then, of those, like Mr. Maxton, who condemn the Labour Party and its programme of reforms of capitalism, but who for years have told you to put your faith in the Labour Party candidates. They told you to trust MacDonald. Now they advise you to trust Mr. Henderson, one of the men who betrayed the workers' interests in the Great War. They are asking you to enter on a further period of wasted effort and lost time, leading surely to yet another betrayal.

Dangerous advice is also given by the Communists. They contest elections but tell you that Parliament is futile. They preach disorder and advocate armed revolt, thus playing into the hands of the most reactionary section of the ruling class. For their own ends they exploit the miseries of the unemployed. Yet eight years ago they were compelled to admit the ineffectiveness of their mass demonstrations. The "Workers' Weekly," the official organ of the Communist Party, wrote as follows in 1923:—

"The unemployed have done all they can, and the Government know it. They have tramped through the rain in endless processions. They have gone in mass deputations to the Guardians. They have attended innumerable meetings and have been told to be 'solid.' They have marched to London, enduring terrific hardships . . ."

"All this has led nowhere."

—"Workers' Weekly," February 10th, 1923. (*Italics ours.*)

Remember that it is only a few years since the Communists, too, were telling you to vote for MacDonald!

WHAT TO DO WITH YOUR VOTE.

If you support one or other of the parties of capitalism, including those parties of reform, the Labour Party, the I.L.P., and the Communists, you will help to prolong your troubles. If you are convinced of the truth of the Socialist case you will not vote for any of these parties. You will realise that the SOCIALIST PARTY OF GREAT BRITAIN is the only party in this country

that works on sound lines for the emancipation of the workers. Consistently since its formation in 1904, the *Socialist Party* has maintained the straight fight for Socialism, at all times giving our present warning that the parties of reform block the road to Socialism.

Unfortunately there are not yet a sufficient number of the working class who desire Socialism, to make it possible for us to run candidates in this election. We call, therefore, upon all those who want Socialism to express their determination by going to the poll and writing "Socialism" across the voting paper. Among other things this will help to advertise the number of those who have made the final decision to have done with capitalism and its defenders. The use of the vote to support any of the candidates in the present election is a vote for capitalism.

Study Socialism. Become Socialists. Resolve that you will help to make the Socialist Party strong enough to run candidates at the next election.

THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE,
The Socialist Party of Great Britain,
42, Great Dover Street, London, S.E.1.
October, 1931.

OUGHT WE TO BACK THE "LEFT-WING" LABOUR LEADERS?

THE CASE OF MR. W. J. BROWN, Ex-M.P.

A correspondent ("Robbo") asks an interesting question. He writes:—

If an opportunity occurs to support a man like W. J. Brown, who though not an S.P.G.B.'er, has done much to expose the hypocrisy of Labour Party leaders, would it not be wise to do so?

On the face of it the question probably implies rather more than our correspondent intended, for it suggests that we should support all who expose the Labour Party leaders, which would mean supporting Liberals and Tories. We are therefore no doubt safe in assuming that our correspondent selects Mr. W. J. Brown because he considers the latter's criticisms to be essentially different from those of Liberal and Conservative opponents of the Labour Party. In other words, we are asked to believe that Mr. W. J. Brown speaks from a Socialist standpoint. Let us examine this.

It is true that Mr. W. J. Brown has often spoken harshly of some of the Labour

Leaders, and has urged what he has called a Socialist policy. But obviously that alone is not enough, for there is hardly a single Labour M.P. who has not done the same. Let us probe more deeply. Does Mr. Brown expose the Labour Leaders and their policy consistently, or only on rare and obscure occasions when it suits him? Does he show up the uselessness of the Labour Party programme? And does he do this from the standpoint of Socialism?

What is his political history? In 1923 and 1924 he fought West Wolverhampton as Labour Party candidate. But there was no criticism then of those who now draw his fire. On the contrary, in 1924 he had Mr. MacDonald on his platform during the election, soliciting votes for him. It was after the general strike that Mr. Brown launched out on his career of "left-wing" criticism of his leaders. In 1928 at the Labour Party Conference he vigorously assailed the programme, "Labour and the Nation," which was under discussion. Much of what he said was true and might have come from a Socialist. Listen to this:—

I would say this, that if the whole of this document were carried into effect—and that will not be done by one government or many governments—the result would be, not Socialism, but a State-subsidised Capitalism, which is an entirely different thing.

My advice to the Conference would be . . . above all to make this clear—that we are in earnest about Socialism, not as a thing for subsequent generations, not as a thing for perorations for our speakers, not as a thing for the dim and distant future, but for this generation to achieve. (Conference Report, p. 207.)

Mr. Brown's speech showed that he had a fairly clear grasp of the nature of the Labour Party programme, and was fully aware what the game was the Labour Leaders were playing. He saw, and said, that they were using the discontent of the workers as a means of getting into office, without any intention whatever of doing other than try to patch up the capitalist system. But to what use did he put his knowledge, his undoubted charm of manner, and his gifts of oratory? The subsequent general election, in 1929, shows only too clearly. Instead of using the election to denounce the Labour Leaders and their capitalist programme, he played exactly the same game as they did. Instead of showing that he was "in earnest about Socialism" by fighting on a Socialist programme, he fought on the very programme he had denounced.

His election address boldly displayed the announcement that he was the "Labour Candidate," committed, therefore, to "Labour and the Nation" and "state-subsidised capitalism." It was full of all the usual capitalist reforms.

Did he expose the Labour Party Leaders? Not at all. A passage of considerable length was devoted to the wonderful things Mr. MacDonald was supposed to have done for disarmament, describing him as the "Peace Leader of the World." Did he advocate Socialism in his address? Not by a single word. The only reference to anything other than reforms is the smug phrase, "The Labour Party stands for a new and more Christian and Social Order," intended obviously to catch the religious vote. The dominant note of the whole address is the emphasised assertion, "Labour is the only alternative to another 5 years of Conservative misrule."

During the subsequent Labour Government Mr. Brown, as General Secretary of the Civil Service Clerical Association, came into conflict with the Labour Ministers owing to the repeated reductions in Civil Service pay. So he resigned from the Parliamentary Labour Party, but not from the Wolverhampton Labour Party, or from the I.L.P. But was it in order to support Socialism against the Labour Leaders? Again No. It was to join Mosley's Party, whose Manifesto he helped to draft, and to which he added his signature. (Published early this year under the title "A National Policy.") This document expressly excludes from consideration the very question about which Socialists are concerned; "Questions of the ultimate goal of society are excluded by the very urgency of the problem which confronts us" (page 6). It was not an appeal to Socialists to work for Socialism, but an appeal to "employers and workers" to "meet the emergency by a common effort." Underlying it throughout was the policy of workers and employers uniting to attack one section of the exploiting class, the bankers. That policy of uniting with the capitalists would on any ground be dangerous for the workers, but Mr. Brown goes further and preaches the deadly doctrine that workers and employers have interests in common. This, if accepted, would destroy the basis of all working-class organisation.

Having had second thoughts about the

expediency of joining the Mosley Party, we next find Mr. Brown, in August of this year, associating with prominent Liberals, Tories, and Fascists to issue a document, "The World Crisis and Unemployment," on behalf of the "Financial Freedom Committee." It contains nothing whatever about Socialism, but preaches salvation by means of currency juggling.

The world's industrial plight can be relieved within a few weeks if the Governments of all nations agree to destroy the Money Monopoly. . . . The Government should nationalise the Bank of England and put an end to the circulation of the present independent promissory notes and substitute for them Treasury notes which are backed by the whole wealth of the nation.

So speak the quacks. And with them Mr. Brown. Can Mr. Brown deny that his associates are frankly determined that what they are pleased to miscall "the national wealth" shall never on any account cease to be what it is now, i.e., private property? In other words, that they are open enemies of Socialism?

On August 22nd, in a speech at Wolverhampton, reported in the "Times" (24th August), Mr. Brown was attacking the Labour Government and still demanding a united front of employers and workers against "the parasites who prey upon both"; a false but plausible device for misleading the workers.

So far we have not seen Mr. Brown's 1931 election address, but he repeatedly stated that he intended to fight as an "independent" candidate, as indeed he did, "on the same programme as I fought at the last election."

The Socialist Party stands for Socialism. Nothing but confusion would result from supporting Mr. Brown or any other of the ambitious politicians who delude the workers into the belief that the social problem can be solved without Socialism.

Besides, if we ought to support Mr. Brown because he exposes the Labour Party Leaders, we should also have to support them for exposing Mr. Brown.

P. S.

DAGENHAM.

Sympathisers in this neighbourhood willing to co-operate in forming a branch are asked to communicate with Mr. W. E. Waters, 396, Heath Way, Dagenham.

OFFICIAL NOTICE.

All communications for the Executive Committee, Subscriptions for the SOCIALIST STANDARD, Articles, and Correspondence submitted for insertion therein, should be addressed—The Socialist Party of Great Britain, 42, Great Dover Street, London, S.E.1, to whom Money Orders should be made payable.

The meetings of the Executive Committee are held at the Head Office, every Tuesday, at 7.30 p.m.

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The Socialist Standard,

NOV.,



1931

SOUND AND FURY.**THE ELECTION AND THE WORKERS.**

The general election has come and gone, and nothing fundamental has been changed. The workers were asked to give a mandate for the continuance of the social system that enslaves them, and in their blindness they have done so.

The National Government supporters just prior to the election numbered 327. They return to office with about 560 supporters, of whom 470 are Conservatives; 70 are Liberals; and 13 are members of the MacDonald Labour Group. The opposition consists of 52 Labour and I.L.P. M.P.s and four Lloyd George Liberals. The total is made up by a few Independents and Irish Nationalists. The Labour Party is now reduced in size approximately to the number elected in 1918.

At the last election, in 1929, the Conservatives polled 8,656,473 votes and won 260 seats. This time they have polled 12,000,000 votes. The Labour vote in 1929 was 8,389,512, and they won 289 seats, many of them on minority votes. The Liberals, in 1929 won only 58 seats, although their vote was 5,308,510. This time the Labour vote has fallen to about 6,650,000, while their seats have dropped far more. They are now less numerous than the Liberals, although the Liberal vote on this occasion is less than 2,500,000.

The MacDonald Labour M.P.s polled only 338,000. In the 1929 Parliament there were over 200 Labour M.P.s who, although elected as Labour candidates, were also members of the I.L.P. There were no Communists in the last Parliament, nor are there any in the new one. The Mosley candidates all failed.

Since 1929 the electorate has grown from 28,850,000 to 30,159,000. The number of electors who did not vote for any candidate increased considerably. So much for the figures.

WHAT WERE THEY FIGHTING FOR?

Many observers, both at home and abroad, some of whom ought to have known better, accepted the rash claim, made for electioneering purposes, that the election was a clear-cut struggle between Capitalism and Socialism. This is a grotesque misreading of the situation. On the one side the Government parties under MacDonald were asking for "a free hand, nothing ruled out," although most of their candidates construed "nothing ruled out" as meaning "tariffs ruled in"; in spite of the fact that by far their most formidable standard bearer in the fight was Mr. Snowden, who is a staunch free-trader.

On the other side were the Labour Party and the group of free-trade Liberals under Mr. Lloyd George. The Labour programme gave prominence to free-trade, to the restoration of the cuts in wages and unemployment pay, and to the nationalisation of the banks. Mr. Lloyd George told his followers that the last of the three chief Labour aims need not be taken seriously, and that Liberals ought to vote for the free-trade Labour candidates. Mr. Snowden, until recently an advocate of bank nationalisation, now opposed it. He also pointed out that the Labour leaders' enthusiasm for free trade was as suspect as their repudiation of the cuts they had approved when in office. In a letter to the Press (see "Daily Telegraph," 22nd October) he made the following illuminating and unanswered statement about his late colleagues in the Labour Government:

Mr. Graham put the case for the tariff. He told us a tax of 10 per cent. on imported manufactured and semi-manufactured goods would raise £25,000,000 a year, and a tax on all imports £60,000,000 a year.

We took two votes. The first was whether we should adopt the proposal of a 10 per cent. tax on manufactured and semi-manufactured imports.

Fifteen members, including Mr. Graham, voted for that, and five against. Then the question of a duty on all imports was put, including food and raw materials. Mr. Graham and four others voted for that, and fifteen against.

It was only after these votes, when it was seen that we could not get unanimity, that the proposal was dropped, because, as Mr. Henderson put it, if it had been persisted with it would have broken up the Cabinet.

This discussion in the Labour Cabinet took place towards the end of August, and was reported in the "Daily Herald" at the time. On August 20th the Herald had a bold headline across the front page—"Tariffs in the balance." The report goes on to say that in the Cabinet:

"There was a tense debate on the proposal for a revenue tariff on imports."

The day before the "Herald" had said: "the proposal for a revenue tariff will receive support from ministers who have hitherto been rigid free-traders."

On August 22nd the "Herald" brought the Trades Union Congress into the picture:

"There is keen division in the T.U.C. on the subject of a tariff for revenue purposes, but the majority would be in favour of such a proposal as an alternative to any cuts in unemployment benefit."

But, it may be asked, if the Labour Party leaders were prepared, even reluctantly, to support the economies and a revenue tariff, why did they oppose the National Government, most of whose members also wanted those things? The answer is, of course, that the party leaders on both sides were doing what they and their predecessors have always done; they were fighting for office. Faced with the National Coalition, the Labour Party grabbed for the Liberal free-trade vote. Mr. Henderson (a few days later than Mr. MacDonald) journeyed to see the Liberal leader, Mr. Lloyd George, on his sick bed. They had a "cordial" but secret talk. The local Labour Parties withdrew their candidates who were opposing Lloyd George and his son and daughter. He, in his broadcast, and in an interview given to the "Daily Herald," and the "Manchester Guardian," and other Liberal papers in their editorials, gave a plain lead to the Liberal voters to vote Labour. During the week before polling day the "Herald" printed column after column of reports of Liberal speakers, Liberal money, and Liberal Party machinery

being placed at the disposal of the Labour candidates. All the past bitter condemnation of Lloyd George and his party was forgotten in the twinkling of an eye when the chance of office and the security of seats were at stake. Forgotten was the admission, so frequent in recent years from Labour leaders, that the issue of free-trade versus protection was of no importance to the workers. No longer was Lloyd George the "coiner of purple phrases and breaker of promises," as the Herald had so happily described him in their special "Lloyd George Number" of December 1st, 1923. No longer was he to be shunned as the man who always wreaks "incredible destruction," the "shoddy salesman" of politics, the "two-faced" politician who "tricked the miners with Sankey Commissions, Duckham Reports, and so on, until the coalowners had all ready for their bitter attack on the Federation." Then "A vote for Lloyd George is a vote for the enemies of the workers and the foes of democracy"; now Lloyd George Liberals and Labourites were all together, fighting the battle of "progress"!

These are the depths to which the reformers have dragged the name Socialism. On the one side MacDonald with his, "I am still a Socialist," leading the Tory army in their fight for tariffs, and on the other side Henderson and Labour Party, attaching the word socialism to their programme of reforms behind which Lloyd George could muster his free-trade capitalist "enemies of the workers."

The utter shamelessness of the Labour leaders can be seen from their plea that they were fighting to defend the workers against the high prices which would follow tariffs. In all the years up to 1929 they had proclaimed themselves the party of low prices. Suddenly, when they came into office in that year they discovered that prices were falling heavily, the thing they had promised to bring about. Promptly they swallowed their low-price theory, and told their disappointed followers that falling prices were the cause of all the trouble. The "Daily Herald," now so strong for cheapness, then carried on for months a campaign for inflation and higher prices. The following is from the "Herald" editorial on July 14th, 1931:—

It is urgent—imperatively urgent—that without delay the necessary steps be taken so to regulate currency and credit as first to raise and then

stabilise prices. . . . Inflation—and it is folly to be frightened by a word—is the only possible remedy.

Three months later, when it was "imperatively urgent" to catch the Liberal free-trade vote, they were back on their old platform of low prices.

THE I.L.P. AND THE COMMUNISTS.

In this election, for the first time, the I.L.P. ran its own candidates without the endorsement of the Labour Party, the endorsement being withheld because the I.L.P. would not undertake always to vote with the Labour Party. In two of the nineteen constituencies which the I.L.P. fought (Peckham and Shettleston) there was also an official Labour Party candidate, while in Stockport (a double member constituency) where the Labour man has hitherto run in double harness with a Liberal, the Labour Party refused to back the I.L.P. interloper who threatened to spoil the arrangement with the Liberals.

The result is interesting. In 1929 the total Labour vote in these nineteen constituencies was 332,413, and they won thirteen seats. This time the I.L.P. polled 260,344 and gained only three seats. They held Shettleston against the official Labour man, and in Peckham their candidate received many times the vote of his official Labour opponent. In Peckham, the official Labour man and the MacDonald Labour man both forfeited their deposits.

The I.L.P. parliamentary group is now, therefore, reduced to three members, and their chairman is outside the House.

Just before the election, their chairman, Mr. Fenner Brockway, writing in the "New Leader" (2nd October), confessed the uselessness of reforms which have been the I.L.P.'s sole stock-in-trade for nearly forty years:

The system of capitalism is failing so obviously that the policy of reforms within capitalism must be rejected. We must concentrate on winning power of such nature that we can proceed boldly with the transition to socialism all along the line.

In spite of which the I.L.P. candidates fought as usual on a programme of reforms. Three years ago Mr. Maxton described the Labour Party programme, "Labour and the Nation," as a programme of capitalism. The 1931 programme, was, he said, "even more reactionary" ("Evening Standard," 1st October). Yet the I.L.P. allowed a large number of its members to fight as official

Labour Party candidates, and endorsed Mr. J. Beckett, as I.L.P. candidate at Peckham after he had declared his "whole-hearted support" of the Labour election programme (South London Press, 9th October). The I.L.P., although much reduced in size, has not altered in its quality. It is still the same body of vote-catching reformists, maintaining a precarious existence on the backs of the trade unions and the Labour Party.

The Communists ran 25 candidates, the same number as in 1929. In 1929 they obtained an aggregate of 50,617 votes. This time their aggregate vote, on a somewhat larger electorate, was 70,844. In the ten constituencies which they fought on both occasions their vote was, in 1929, 39,283, and in 1931, 48,612. They did best where they were fighting only one candidate, a Labour Party candidate.

They, too, fought on a reform programme of about twenty "demands" ("Daily Worker," 14th October): In practise their policy is always determined by the actions of the other reformist parties. They run yapping at the heels of the Labour Party, and where the Labour Party goes they go, too. As the Labour Party, at the eleventh hour decided to be a free-trade party, the Communists had to follow suit. So one of their "demands" was "No taxes or tariffs which raise the price of food and clothing for the workers." On Sunday, October 11th, a Communist Party demonstration in Hyde Park marched behind a banner with the "revolutionary" slogan, "No Taxes on the People's Food."

In this general election for the first time the official communist advice to the voters did not, so far as our knowledge goes, include a recommendation to vote for all or even some of the Labour Party candidates.

THE FUTURE.

The election changes nothing except the persons who shall occupy office, and some questions of capitalist trade and finance, of interest to sections of the capitalists in their mutual antagonisms. Capitalism is now sunk in one of its periodic crises of over-production. In due course it will stagger back to "normal," before falling again into yet other crises. This process will continue until the workers understand socialism and organise in the Socialist Party to achieve it. The votes for the Tory-Labour-Liberal Party under Mac-

Donald, and for the Labour-Liberal Party under Henderson and Lloyd George, are votes for capitalism and reforms of one kind and another. They are not votes for socialism. This is proved by the alternating fortunes of the parties at succeeding elections. We are not prophets, but one thing seems certain—that the Labour Party will never obtain, and do not really want, an independent majority. They may, perhaps, again reach office, but only with Liberal support in the House and in the constituencies. The Leaders understand this, hence the efforts they made at the Labour Party Conference in October to secure the rejection of a resolution which, if it had been passed, would have committed them never to accept office as a minority. What we have long pointed out is now becoming clear for all to see. It is impossible to unite the workers on reform programmes. Each reform antagonises as many workers as it attracts. Reform programmes, as we can see before our eyes, split the workers into half a dozen warring sections. Another illusion has also been dispelled. We were told that after voting "Labour" workers would then vote for Socialism; instead of which, as we foretold, they have returned to Conservatism. Only the simple demand for socialism will eventually hold the workers.

Those who have patiently waited, bearing all disappointments, but trusting in the Labour Party until such time as it had an independent majority, will do well to ponder the prospect of a "Labour" Party tied permanently to Liberal votes, and limited to a programme approved by Mr. Lloyd George and his capitalist free-trade backers.

SHEFFIELD

PUBLIC MEETINGS will be held at the
TRADES HALL (ROOM 6)
CHARLES STREET

	Subject	Speaker
Wednesday, Nov. 25th	"The Principles of Socialism"	B. OSBORNE
Wednesday, Dec. 23rd	"Trade Unions and the Socialist Party"	J. HORNER
Wednesday, January 27th, 1932	"Unemployment"	E. BODEN

Admission free. Non-members invited. Questions and Discussion. Commence 7.30 p.m.

THE GOLD STANDARD AND THE CRISIS.

Each of the periodic economic crises brings its own particular explanation. Publicists, orthodox economists, and politicians of every shade of opinion, are agreed that on this occasion the nigger in the wood-pile is the "gold standard," or rather the failure of France and the U.S.A. to operate that standard "according to the rules of the game." But despite their unanimity our scepticism is reasonable when it is recalled that there have been 16 crises during the past 150 years, and that a different explanation has been forthcoming each time. All of those crises, including the present one, have exhibited, in greater or less degree, the same features, viz., an accumulation of stocks of all commodities, a decline in production owing to the inability to sell the products of agriculture and industry at a profit, industrial bankruptcies and banking difficulties as a consequence of a general fall of prices, falling money wages, growing unemployment, and for the mass of the population want in a time of superabundance.

This general similarity between one crisis and another points to there being a general explanation for all of them. Instead of which the explanations are always changing. This time we are told that the trouble has been caused by the attempt to operate the gold standard in a world split up by tariff walls and burdened by war debts. Can this explanation be accepted? To answer the question it is necessary to consider what the gold standard is and what its history has been.

First of all it must be noticed that while the gold standard implies a monetary system based on gold, it does not require that gold coins shall actually circulate. For all practical purposes there is no difference between a country whose monetary unit consists of a gold coin which circulates and is used as money in ordinary commercial transactions, and a country in which there is a paper currency convertible into gold. Both are on the gold standard. Before the war this country had, as its monetary unit, the sovereign, which passed freely from hand to hand in every-day transactions. Between 1925 and September of this year monetary settlements were effected in paper pounds which (above a minimum value of £1,700) were exchangeable into gold at a fixed rate. At both periods Great Britain was on the gold standard. What is necessary for a

country to be on the gold standard is, then, not that there should actually be gold coins circulating, but that the unit of currency must, if it is a paper unit, be exchangeable on demand at some central institution, whether a bank, mint, or Government department, without charge to the holder, for a known and fixed amount of gold. Conversely any holder of gold must have the right to exchange it for currency, either coin or paper, at the same rate. Finally free importation and exportation of gold must be permitted so that a holder of currency who has to settle a debt abroad may do so by exporting gold obtained at the central institution in exchange for his currency at the fixed rate; while anyone having funds abroad must be able to convert them into the currency of his own country by importing gold and exchanging it for the currency of his own country at the central institution. In order to avoid complicating the question later it should be pointed out that free importation and exportation of gold is not necessary for this purpose provided that the central institution is compelled by law to buy and sell gold-backed foreign exchange, i.e., the currencies of other gold standard countries, at fixed rates corresponding to the amount of gold in the monetary units of the respective gold standard countries.

Given that these conditions are observed the country is on the gold standard, the significance of which is twofold. The first is that the value of the currency is the same as, and is dependent on, the value of gold. In other words, the amount of commodities that can be bought with £1 will be determined by the amount of commodities that will exchange for 113 grains weight of gold, that being the amount of gold for which £1 can by law be exchanged. Movements in the value of gold will be accompanied by corresponding changes in the purchasing power of the currency unit. As the value of currency reflects itself in the form of prices this is the same as saying that, under the gold standard, if the value of gold falls, prices will rise, and the amount of commodities which can be purchased with a £1 will diminish. Conversely if the value of gold rises, prices will fall. The second significant feature about the gold standard is that the general level of prices in two gold standard countries must be in equilibrium. This follows from the fact that, as has been pointed out, gold moves freely between the two countries. The price levels will not be

exactly the same in the two countries for reasons which, however, are of no importance from the point of view of the present article and can therefore be ignored. The two price levels will tend to move up or down together, in accordance with changes in the value of gold.

So much for the value of a currency in terms of commodities, i.e., its internal value. Now let us consider the value of one currency in terms of another, usually referred to as its external value. Under the gold standard the value of one currency in terms of another, expressed in what is known as the foreign exchange rate, is fixed within narrow limits. For example, when this country was on the gold standard £1 was exchangeable by law for 113 grains of gold, and the American dollar was exchangeable by law for 23.22 grains. If 113 is divided by 23.22 the result is approximately 4.86. So that, apart from certain small variations that can be ignored here, the value of £1 was automatically fixed at 4.86 dollars. The exchange rate with francs, marks, etc., was similarly fixed.

To sum up the argument to this point we see the following consequences of an international gold standard:—

1. The value of the currencies of all gold standard countries is determined by, and fluctuates with, the value of gold.
2. Prices in all gold standard countries tend to move up or down together.
3. Exchange rates between gold standard countries remain stable.

After this brief survey of the principles of the gold standard now let us turn to its history.

As soon as division of labour resulted in individuals and social groups ceasing themselves to produce all the articles they consumed, a system for exchanging the products of various forms of human activity became necessary. In the first place recourse was had to simple barter. Cattle, for example, would be exchanged direct for corn or some other article. In the course of time direct barter became too cumbersome and a "universal equivalent" was evolved for the purpose of effecting exchanges. For a variety of reasons the universal equivalent that ultimately came to be generally adopted was a given weight of metal. In Western Europe this metal was silver. It soon came to be realised that it was more convenient to have coins of a known weight of metal instead of having to

measure out quantities of the metal for each transaction. Gold coins were introduced in the 15th century, and finally this country led the world in making gold the basis of its currency, relegating silver coins to the position of "token" money, their value being fixed by law as a proportion of that of the gold coin. During the second half of the 19th century most of the leading countries of the world also abandoned the silver standard, and reorganised their currencies on a gold basis. When the war broke out in 1914 all the leading commercial countries were on the gold standard, and their currencies were gold coins which actually circulated. At the same time there were in circulation bank notes which were redeemable into gold coin or bullion. The war saw the collapse of the old gold standard and the replacement of gold coins, as circulating media, by paper money. After the war, when the gold standard came to be restored, certain countries, including Great Britain, did not restore gold coins to circulation. Instead they retained their paper currencies, but made them convertible into gold, and permitted the export of gold. The notes, therefore, had the character of gold.

Another significant difference between the post-war and pre-war systems was that after the war certain countries did not revert to the simple gold standard, but to a developed standard known as the "gold exchange standard." Under the pre-war system it had been the rule for each country to keep its own separate gold reserve for cashing notes. Under the gold exchange standard a country—Austria is an actual example—keeps part of its reserves not in the form of actual gold in the vaults of its own Central Bank, but in the form of balances with the Central Banks in other gold standard countries. As these balances could always be withdrawn in gold and taken back to the country of origin, it was thought that they were "as good as gold"; as indeed they were, so long as conditions remained normal. But the system had one important consequence. Gold deposited, say, by the Austrian National Bank with the Bank of England, was not only the basis of currency issued in Austria, but also provided the Bank of England with funds which it proceeded to utilise in this country. Under the pre-war system the withdrawal of gold from the Austrian National Bank would only have affected, directly, that bank. But under the new system the Bank of England would also

be affected. In other words, under the "gold exchange system" events affecting the credit situation in one country would be likely to have immediate consequences in other countries, because the credit structure of more than one country had come to be based on the one lot of gold.

There remains another aspect of the post-war situation to be examined. The gold standard was never intended, as is so frequently alleged, to provide for the liquidation of an adverse balance of payments between two countries by the shipment of gold. Under the gold standard the function of gold shipments is to produce conditions in which an adverse balance of payments is eliminated. To reduce the matter to its simplest terms, the position can be explained as follows:—If people in country A are buying more goods and services from country B than B is buying from A, it must be because commodities are cheaper in B than in A. As the currencies of both countries are based on gold this is equivalent to saying that the value of gold is lower in A than in B. Consequently, gold will be sent from A to B. The gold for shipment will be obtained by changing notes into gold in A, and sending it to B. When it reaches B this gold will be converted into the currency of that country. The result will be to cause monetary stringency and a probable rise in the bank-rate in A, thereby lowering prices there. While in B the monetary situation will be eased and prices will rise. This will tend to discourage people in A from buying goods in B, and will encourage people in B to buy goods in A. This will continue to the point where A's exports are increased and its imports diminished, sufficiently to eliminate the former adverse balance. From the foregoing it will be seen that under the gold standard the function of gold shipments is to cause adjustment of prices in the countries between which gold shipments take place, such that their international payments and receipts shall balance by the exchange of goods and services.

Owing to conditions arising out of the war gold shipments in recent years have been resorted to for the purpose of adjusting unfavourable balances of payments. What these conditions were can only be referred to here very briefly. Among the more important are the post-war system of tariffs, particularly in America, which prevented debtor countries from liquidating their indebtedness in goods, and compelled them

to pay in gold; the flow of international payments in one direction, principally to U.S.A. and France, owing to Reparations, etc.; and finally deliberate action by Central Banks to neutralise the effects that gold shipments would otherwise have had on the credit structure and the price levels. So that the adjustment of adverse trade balances by means of goods and services, in the manner discussed earlier, was impeded. In Great Britain, for example, the Bank of England consistently counterbalanced withdrawals of gold by what is known as its "open market" policy. In other words, when gold was withdrawn, and credit as a consequence became scarce, the Bank of England restored the position by buying securities, so that the funds that the money market lost as a result of the gold shipments were restored to it by the payments made by the Bank of England for the securities it bought. One of the main reasons why the Bank of England did this was probably that it was seeking to keep interest rates as low as possible in order that the Treasury should not have to pay more interest on its large floating debt. Whatever the reason may have been, the important fact is that Central Bank action frequently operated to make gold shipments of no avail, so far as concerns the adjustment of international balance of payments, by means of alterations in the relative amount of commodity imports and exports. This means that the gold standard in recent years was called upon to achieve purposes it was never designed to fulfil and which it was incapable of achieving; gold was used to liquidate adverse balances instead of operating to promote conditions in which adverse balances would disappear. Finally the inevitable happened. The gold standard broke down.

What will happen in the future to the gold standard need not be discussed here. For us the problem is, "Was the crisis caused by the failure of the gold standard? Can it be overcome and economic welfare assured to all by a re-establishment of the gold standard, as we have known it or in some revised form, or by its supersession by some other currency system?" The answer to both questions is an emphatic "No." The reasons for this answer must be reserved for a later article. Here it will suffice to point out that the recent acute world depression started, and has been most pronounced, in U.S.A. If gold is the cause of all the trouble this is rather strange seeing that

U.S.A. was crammed with gold. Secondly, it is hard to see how the world in general, and the working-class in particular, would have benefited if, before the crisis, there had been another £100 million, or even £1,000 million, of gold available in the world. What could have been done with it that would have overcome the fact that world stocks of all kinds, and especially of raw materials, were so high that they could not be disposed of at prices which would yield a profit? The plain truth is that capitalism had again run up against its permanent and insoluble problem of being unable to distribute all the goods produced, because capitalist production is for sale at a profit and not for use. Therein is the cause of this, as of every other economic crisis of the past 150 years.

B. S.

CORRECTION.

In the article "The Founding of the Socialist Party" in the October issue it was stated that the inaugural meeting took place in the Painters' Hall. This should have been the Printers' Hall, Bartlett's Passage, Fetter Lane, E.C.

NEWCASTLE - ON - TYNE

Open-air meetings are held every

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NOTTINGHAM

On Sunday November 15th at 2.30 p.m.

A. KOHN

will address the

**NOTTINGHAM COSMOPOLITAN
DEBATING SOCIETY**

**Subject "Why the S.P.G.B.
is Opposed to all other Parties."**

A WORD TO SYMPATHISERS.

During and immediately before the General Election we distributed free of charge 170,000 copies of two leaflets, one on the fall of the Labour Government, and the other on the election issues. To do so we used up the fund we had earmarked for that purpose and in addition we have incurred a heavy debt. Now we have to replace that money in order to be able to issue further leaflets as occasion arises, particularly bearing in mind that another General Election may not be long delayed. We need money for other purposes. We are out-of-stock of certain pamphlets, and we have in preparation a new pamphlet on the Socialist Party and its principles. If only half of the readers of the SOCIALIST STANDARD would contribute one shilling a month to our funds we could quickly clear off our debt and would have in hand, before the end of the winter, a substantial part of the money needed for the new pamphlet. We address this appeal especially to non-members because we realise that there are many who sympathise with the Party's position but are unable, for one reason or another, to join up or take an active part in propaganda. We ask you to remember that the Socialist Party, unlike other political parties, receives no financial support from the trade unions or from wealthy individuals. The burden on our members is, therefore, a heavy one.

Send your donations to the Treasurer, 42, Great Dover Street, London, S.E.1. Acknowledgment will be made by post and in these columns.

CORRESPONDENTS.

Replies to several correspondents are held over owing to pressure on space.

WATLING ESTATE, EDGWARE.

Sympathisers willing to co-operate in forming a branch in this neighbourhood are asked to communicate with Mr. G. Beeson, 56, Barnfield Road, Burnt Oak, Edgware.

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SOCIALISM FOR GREAT BRITAIN ONLY.

A correspondent (W. Langham, W. Ealing) asks how this country will obtain food supplies from abroad after the establishment of Socialism here. It is, of course, inconceivable that Socialism could exist in Great Britain alone while the rest of the world remained capitalist. But this presents no special problem, since it is equally inconceivable that capitalist development and Socialist propaganda could convert a majority to Socialism in this country without comparable progress having been made in the rest of the capitalist world.

When Socialism has been established on an international basis, the problem of producing and distributing goods will naturally call for organisation, and society will set up administrative machinery for that purpose. The organisation of production and distribution will not be fettered by the present national frontiers, and the problem of moving goods from one country or continent to another will not be different in kind from the problem of distribution within these areas. The world already shows many instances of smoothly-working international machinery, such, for example, as the Universal Postal Union, which co-ordinates the international transport of postal matter.

ED. COMM.

PAMPHLETS FOR SALE.

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S.P.G.B. PROPAGANDA MEETINGS**LONDON DISTRICT.**

Sunday ... Tottenham, West Green Corner, 11.30 a.m.
Victoria Park, 11.30 a.m. and 3.30 p.m.
Walworth, Liverpool Street, 11.30 a.m.
Finsbury Park, 3.30 p.m.
Clapham Common, 3 p.m.
Cock Hotel, East Ham, 7.30 p.m.
Prince of Wales, Harrow Road, 11.30 a.m. and 7.30 p.m.
Battersea, Princes Head, 11.30 a.m.
Stamford Hill (near Regent's Theatre), 8 p.m.

Monday ... Ridley Road, Dalston, E.8., 8 p.m.

Wednesday ... The Fountain, Forest Gate Station, 8 p.m.
Prince of Wales, Paddington, 8 p.m.
Stepney Green, E., 8 p.m.

Thursday ... Prince of Wales, Harrow Road, 8 p.m.
Kenninghall Road, Clapton, E., 8 p.m.

Friday ... Vallance Road, E., 8 p.m.
Mossbury Road, Battersea, S.W., 8 p.m.
Prince of Wales, Paddington, 8 p.m.

Saturday ... Jolly Butchers Hill, Wood Green, 8 p.m.
Stamford Hill (near Regent's Theatre), 8 p.m.

BRANCH DIRECTORY.

BATTERSEA.—Sec., 2 Hanbury Road, S.W.11. Branch meets Thursday, 8.30 p.m. at The Waiting Room, Latchmere Baths, entrance in Burns Road. Discussion second Thursday in month.

BECONTREE.—Sec., Hy. Gratton, 4, Drummond Ave., Brooklands, Romford. Branch meets 1st and 3rd Wednesdays at 7.30, at above address.

BIRMINGHAM.—Sec., E. Jesper, 32, Rollason-rd., Erdington. Branch meets Hill Top Café, 197, Spring Hill, 1st Sunday in month at 11 a.m.

CENTRAL.—Membership obtained only through the Ex. Committee. Applications to General Sec.

EAST LONDON.—Sec. W. Reynolds, 57, Weymouth Terrace, Hackney Rd. Branch meets every Thursday, at 7.30 p.m., at Limehouse Library (Committee Room), Commercial Road, E. Lectures on alternate Thursdays. Public invited.

GLASGOW.—Branch meets 2nd and 4th Fridays in month 8 p.m., at 118, Howwood Street, Glasgow, S.1. Sec., A. Shaw.

HACKNEY.—Branch meets Arcadian Cafe, 42, Amherst Road, Hackney, 1st and 3rd Fridays in month, 8 p.m., Discussions 9.30. Communication to Sec. at 21 Bridge Street, Homerton, E. 9.

HULL.—Branch meets 1st and 3rd Wednesdays in month at 15, Grosvenor Street, Beverley Road. Communications to M. V. Coupland at above address.

ISLINGTON.—All communications to N. A. Bishop, 39, Poynings Road, Highgate, N.19.

LEYTON.—Communications to Sec., 8 Cheltenham Road, E.10.

MANCHESTER.—Sec., D. White, 91, Rochdale Road, Middleton. Branch meets 2nd and 4th Mondays in month at 8.15 p.m. at Room 2, 183, Oxford Road, All Saints.

PADDINGTON.—Branch meeting held on alternate Wednesdays, 8 p.m., at 430 Harrow Road, W.9.

SHEFFIELD.—Branch meets 2nd and 4th Wednesdays 7.30 p.m., Room 5, Trades Hall, Charles Street. Public discussion after business. Secretary E. Boden, 74, Glenalmond Road.

SOUTHEND-ON-SEA.—Sec., J. Bird, 5, Wellington-avenue, Westcliffe-on-Sea.

SOUTHWARK.—Branch meets Fridays at 8 p.m., 42, Great Dover Street, S.E.1. Communications to Sec., at above address.

TOOTING.—Branch meets on alternate Wednesdays at "Labour Centre," 126, Upper Tooting Road. Secretary, W. MEHEW, 19, Littleton Street, S.W.18.

TOTTENHAM.—Sec., F. A. Hammond, 64, Stroud Green Rd., N.4. Branch meets 1st and 3rd Fridays each month, Room 2, Trades Hall, 7, Bruce Grove, Discussion after branch business. Public invited.

WALTHAMSTOW.—Sec. S. E. Williams, 64, Bloxhall-rd., Leyton, E.10. Branch meets at Workmen's Hall, High-st., 2nd and 4th Mondays each month.

WATFORD.—A. Lawson, Sec., 107, Kensington-avenue, Watford. Branch meets Mondays at 8.30 p.m. at Secretary's address.

WEST HAM.—Branch meets Thursdays at 8 p.m. at 167, Romford-rd., Stratford. Sec., P. Hallard, 22, Colegrave-rd., Stratford, E.

WOOD GREEN.—All communications to Sec., F. W. Godfrey, 28, Russell Road, Palmers Green, N.13. Branch meets 2nd and 4th Wednesday in month at 8.30 p.m. at Stirling House, Stuart Crescent.

THE SOCIALIST PARTY OF GREAT BRITAIN.

OBJECT.—The establishment of a system of society based upon the common ownership and democratic control of the means and instruments for producing and distributing wealth by and in the interests of the whole community.

DECLARATION OF PRINCIPLES.

THE SOCIALIST PARTY of Great Britain HOLDS—

That society as at present constituted is based upon the ownership of the means of living (i.e., lands, factories, railways, etc.) by the capitalist or master class, and the consequent enslavement of the working class by whose labour alone wealth is produced.

That in society, therefore, there is an antagonism of interests, manifesting itself as a class struggle, between those who possess but do not produce and those who produce but do not possess.

That this antagonism can be abolished only by the emancipation of the working class from the domination of the master class, by the conversion into the common property of society of the means of production and distribution, and their democratic control by the whole people.

That as in the order of social evolution the working class is the last class to achieve its freedom, the emancipation of the working class will involve the emancipation of all mankind, without distinction of race or sex.

That this emancipation must be the work of the working class itself.

That as the machinery of government, including the armed forces of the nation, exists only to conserve the monopoly by the capitalist class of the wealth taken from the workers, the working class must organise consciously and politically for the conquest of the powers of government, national and local, in order that this machinery, including these forces, may be converted from an instrument of oppression into the agent of emancipation and the overthrow of privilege, aristocratic and plutocratic.

That as political parties are but the expression of class interests, and as the interest of the working class is diametrically opposed to the interests of all sections of the master class, the party seeking working-class emancipation must be hostile to every other party.

THE SOCIALIST PARTY of Great Britain, therefore, enters the field of political action determined to wage war against all other political parties, whether alleged labour or avowedly capitalist, and calls upon the members of the working class of this country to muster under its banner to the end that a speedy termination may be wrought to the system which deprives them of the fruits of their labour, and that poverty may give place to comfort, privilege to equality, and slavery to freedom.

Those agreeing with the above principles and desiring enrolment in the Party should apply for membership form to secretary of nearest branch or at Head Office.

THE Socialist Standard

The Official Organ of **THE SOCIALIST PARTY** of Great Britain.

No. 328. Vol. 28.]

LONDON, DECEMBER, 1931

[MONTHLY, TWOPENCE.]

THE BASIS OF SOCIALIST ORGANISATION. A LESSON OF THE ELECTION.

The one thing that most clearly marks off the Socialist Party of Great Britain from the other organisations which claim an interest in Socialism, is our view that the only possible basis for a Socialist Party is an understanding of socialist principles. When the founders of the S.P.G.B. decided on our present Declaration of Principles as the minimum condition of membership, they had already had long experience of alternative forms of organisation. They had seen the disastrous results of bringing together people without socialist knowledge who were attracted merely by one or other of a long list of political and social reforms. Such an organisation cannot be more advanced than its members, and therefore cannot take action for the furtherance of Socialism. Indeed, it can take action at all only with the greatest difficulty, for it rarely happens that all the members are agreed upon any one of the reform demands. Every attempt to be definite provokes internal friction or secession movements. The electoral success of such a party is its aim and also its undoing. For with office comes the demand from the members that steps be taken to fulfil all the promises. Of course they cannot be fulfilled; capitalism stands in the way. The elation of victory gives place quickly to angry criticism of the men or the programme. So every such party meets its fate sooner or later at the hands of the workers who gave it life and strength. The last election, coming after more than two years of Labour Government, shows us the internal contradictions of the Labour Party, working out to their necessary conclusion. Those who still cling to the belief that an organisation of non-socialists, brought

together upon a programme of reforms, can work for Socialism should ponder over the Labour Party's collapse.

"Forward," the Scottish I.L.P. journal, in its issues dated November 7th, 14th and 21st, published articles from a large number of Labour candidates in Scottish constituencies telling why they lost seats and votes. The collection is a very powerful justification for the position of the S.P.G.B. Below we give some brief extracts:—

Mr. Thomas Johnson (West Stirling-shire): "We lost, inter alia, because about 15 per cent. of our abnormal vote in 1929 transferred itself to our opponents."

Mr. T. Henderson (Trarsteston) gives as one of the reasons for his defeat, "warring elements within the movement."

Mr. Michael Marcus (Dundee) says: "Recent events prove conclusively that our first task is to convert certain socialists to Socialism." He records that panic at the thought of a Labour victory seized even the poorest workers who had not so much as a few pounds in the Savings Bank.

Mr. James C. Welsh (Coatbridge) tells that the unemployed and their wives voted against him, although, as he complains bitterly, "I think I can claim that nowhere have the unemployed had better services given them."

Mr. D. N. Mackay (Inverness-shire) confesses that the electors voted for the National candidate because they still regarded MacDonald and Snowden as "typical Labourists" and "their views were accepted as final." But what a confession to make! To admit that the party supporters had been recruited simply on the names of its former leaders.

Mr. John Winning (Kelvingrove) says

that working-class voters, employed and unemployed, after two years of Labour Government, flocked to the poll "to protect their few pennies in the Savings Bank and Post Office from confiscation by a Labour Government": not only the old and decrepit, but also "the young and vigorous." He finds it a chastening thought, and wonders what is wrong with the Labour Party's "socialist" propaganda.

Mr. R. Gibson (N. Edinburgh) found that the unemployed voted Tory because they were promised jobs, and, it seems, were more impressed by this than by the Labour promise to look after their unemployment pay. It is a saddening discovery for reformers that the workers positively dislike their particular brand of reforms. Mr. Gibson had the support of the local Liberals, and paints a touching picture of a "Liberal woman . . . pleading with a Communist to vote Labour."

Mr. J. S. Clarke (Maryhill) says: "Prominent members of the I.L.P., including the Glasgow organiser, not only abstained from voting for the Labour candidate, but conducted a virulent campaign against him." Mr. Clarke is one of those who in the past have told us that we ought to get together with the great united Labour Party. But even if we wanted to, how could we now that it is "united" into several furiously battling fragments?

Mr. J. Pollock (Kilmarnock) attributes defeat to the Labour supporters having been won over to tariffs, and to the deadly blow administered to the local Labour Party in 1929 when the Labour Head Office forced a particularly anti-working class Labour candidate on the division.

Mr. A. Woodburn (Leith) says that in his constituency the workers felt that they had had just about enough of Labour Government "and it was time to see what another Government would do." That is confirmation of our own often expressed view of the results of Labour Government.

Mr. J. Sullivan (Bothwell) lost his seat because he had quarrelled with the other reform party, the Communists, and they ran a candidate against him.

Mr. G. Mathers (W. Edinburgh) relates that certain of his own dissatisfied supporters, instead of helping him, came to his meetings "trying to concoct trick questions." He saw with surprise that the unemployed, the teachers, and others who were affected by the National Government's

economy plans, nevertheless voted "Nationalist."

In South Ayrshire, Mr. James Brown suffered from the effects of his own party's propaganda. The Labour Party, having decided to be Free Traders, were promising to keep prices down, so the farmers and fishermen—who wanted high prices, not low ones—voted against the Labour Party, which was expecting to get their votes.

DISSATISFACTION WITH LABOUR GOVERNMENT.

Mr. F. Martin (E. Aberdeenshire) gives the following reasons for the shrinkage of the Labour vote:—

The general scare; support for Ramsay MacDonald, which caused a certain number of Socialists to vote for the Conservative, and which also induced many abstentions; dissatisfaction with the record of Labour in office.

The chief Tory asset was, in Mr. Martin's view, the prospect of tariffs.

In Galloway, Mr. H. McNeill was beaten by a combination of factors. There was a Mosley candidate preaching "scientific capitalism" (and seemingly some voters thought this must be better than capitalism badly run by the Labour Party). Numbers of Co-operators voted Tory "to save the pound, and at the same time their divi" from their Labour friends.

In Motherwell, which the Communists used to declare had a solid Communist majority (although they won it on the usual Lib.-Lab. reform programme), the Rev. James Barr was up against a Liberal who is chairman of the local football club, and therefore popular. Then, it appears, the electorate failed to realise that a National victory meant protectionist capitalism instead of free trade capitalism, and "they paid no heed to the warning of the 'Manchester Guardian.'" The Liberal candidate won other votes by declaring that the rich are having a bad time; he "gave out grossly inaccurate figures as to additional burdens imposed on surtax payers." And finally he tried to take away Catholic voters from the Protestant Rev. J. Barr.

May we offer to this Labour candidate what would seem to be a simple but certain road to victory next time? Let him become chairman of a football club, declare himself a Protectionist-Free-Trader and a Catholic-Protestant, and train all his supporters to read the Liberal "Manchester Guardian." Then, no doubt, we shall soon have Socialism!! The chief obstacle from

the Rev. Barr's point of view is that, if he discovers a vote-catching stunt, his opponents will use it too.

Mr. J. Gibson (S. Lanark) was defeated because, among other things, the workers did not like what they saw of Labour Government. He says:—

The Labour Government did not help us. It had attempted to operate capitalism only to find itself faced with a crisis that demanded Socialist action.

Mr. Gibson does not explain how, having been elected to operate capitalism, they could have taken socialist action even if they knew what it is and wished to do so. It was only the disgust of the voters that prevented Mr. Gibson from being returned like the others "to operate capitalism." That was what he was offering to do.

"THEY HAD NO SAVINGS."

In Berwick and Haddington, Mr. G. Sinkinson had a different experience from some of his colleagues elsewhere. He found that the miners solidly resisted the panic about Savings Banks, "for the very simple reason that they had no savings." Mr. Sinkinson does not explain what the Labour Government had been doing for over two years that the miners should have been thus pauperised.

Mr. J. Rankin (Pollok) describes the "huge Labour majorities of 1929 melting like snow upon the desert's dusty face." The fall in the Labour vote was due to the following: "The ongoing in the Labour Cabinet during the crisis." At every meeting he was asked, "Did your own Cabinet not agree to nine-tenths of the cuts you are now opposing?" He describes the election as being "simply a vote of confidence in MacDonald"; and like others who for years and years had been telling the voters to trust blindly in MacDonald, Mr. Rankin was caught in his own trap.

Miss Jennie Lee, in N. Lanark, failed to get the votes of electors in a new district, and suffered from "the general disappointment caused by the spirit in which the Labour Government had applied itself to its tasks." It will be recalled that Miss Lee, when she was elected in 1929 on a programme of reforms which did not so much as mention Socialism, claimed her election as a "socialist" victory. Of course, neither her victory then nor her defeat now had anything to do with Socialism.

In West Lothian Mr. Shinwell expected the shale oil workers and miners to be dis-

appointed with the results of Labour Government whose "reforms" had, in fact, worsened their conditions. He saw the miners voting for a royalty owner, and Catholic workers voting for a Protestant Orangeman.

In Shettleston the Labour man was beaten by Mr. M'Govern, who fought with the backing of the I.L.P. and its leaders (and the Catholic Press). The I.L.P. parent trying to kill its own overgrown child, the Labour Party!

In Bute and N. Ayr, Mr. A. Sloan attributed his defeat, partly at least, to the spectacle of the Labour Government putting its programme into operation.

Frankly, I must say that the action or inaction of the late Labour Government had quite a lot to do with it. There was resentment in the minds of the workers that they had been badly let down by the Labour Government.

THE LABOUR GOVERNMENT'S "MEANS TEST."

With regard to accusations against the Labour Cabinet that they had agreed to the economies, he says:—

I have yet to see, hear, or read any reasoned reply to the accusation. I also struck the first fruits of the Anomalies Act. . . It is a means test of far reaching effect imposed by the Labour Government.

(*Italics his.*)

Mr. Sloan gives it as his view that the Labour Government, if judged simply on its merits, would have had an even worse defeat at the polls. Only the unpopular National Government economies saved the Labour candidates some loss of votes.

In East Renfrewshire, Bailie Strain had to fight the "fighting marquis of Clydesdale," a popular sporting man, and also the I.L.P. The branch of the I.L.P. not only decided to take no part in the election, but refused to lend or hire out its hall for Labour meetings, this being done as "a protest against the actions of the Parliamentary Labour Party."

Bailie Strain, who was the Co-operative nominee, found himself up against Co-operative opposition. He says:—

The Tories undoubtedly took full advantage of the elements, hundreds of motor cars and fine-dressed ladies, among whom were many prominent co-operators, helping to rush the electors to the polls.

Mr. A. Fraser Macintosh, at Montrose Burghs, gives a fine illustration of the dangers of depending upon leaders. His party has always told the workers to trust in MacDonald. So large numbers of Labour

supporters continued to do so in this election. You cannot unmake a god in a few weeks. Other Labour supporters had become apathetic and would not vote, because the Labour Government had "let them down." All that Mr. Macintosh and his helpers could do was to say that it was not the Labour Party which had betrayed the workers, but only its leaders. To which, as Mr. Macintosh confesses, the workers replied that you could not separate the leaders from the Party.

Our little band showed them, but it was of little avail—we did not count, it was the leaders who counted, and they had let them down and would do so again.

The Labour Party cannot have it both ways. If they build a party on its leaders, they must put up with the devastating consequences when the leaders desert.

REFORMS WHICH HIT THE MINERS.

Mr. J. Westwood (Peebles and S. Midlothian) was up against the opposition of the miners, whose sufferings had been aggravated by one of the Labour Government's "reforms."

There was also a feeling of bitterness amongst the miners at the inadequacy of the Coal Mines Act to deal with the problem of the mines, made more difficult by the short time worked, low wages received and recent reductions applied to our men in the Scottish coalfields.

There was also strong anti-Labour feeling, because of the Labour Government's Anomalies Act, withdrawing unemployment pay from married women.

Helen Gault, the I.L.P. candidate for East Perth, lost 4,500 votes as compared with 1929. In that year she was official Labour candidate, and had the benefits of having MacDonald on her platform, and "generous financial assistance" from the trade unions. This time her official Labour Party endorsement was withdrawn, and with it the trade union money. She says that the greatest factor in causing former voters to desert her was the action of the Labour Government—"My greatest handicap was undoubtedly the record of the Labour Government." She makes the frank admission that, although she and her helpers knew that the charges against the Labour Government were true, they carefully refrained from admitting it.

THE SAME THING OVER AGAIN

The above extracts from "Forward" should serve to show what the workers actually think about the Labour Party, and

how little they understand their class position and the socialist case. Here we can see the falseness of the I.L.P. and Labour Party belief that you can lead along non-socialist workers by giving them the "practical benefits" of Labour Government. Labour administration of capitalism antagonises the workers just as speedily as Tory or Liberal administration.

An incredible amount of work has been devoted to building up the Labour Party and I.L.P. on a basis of reforms, and when they have their chance of giving effect to their programme, capitalism simply smashes their fiddling schemes out of all recognition. It is obvious that in the election the complex jumble of plans and promises contained in "Labour and the Nation" had little effect on the voters.

They simply voted on what they conceived to be the issue of the moment. The Labour Party had been thrust through the natural unpopularity of being the Government, or had manoeuvred itself, on to the wrong side as regards electoral success. Now they are taking stock and preparing to get back again into office when the National Government also fails to solve the insoluble problems of capitalism. But the Labour leaders are not learning the real lesson of the election. They are not even aware that it has proved once more that the only basis for a Socialist Party is an understanding of Socialism. All they are doing is to mix up another mess of reforms, calculated to capture the largest number of votes.

H.

HACKNEY

INDOOR MEETINGS will be held in
THE GREEN ROOM.

BROTHERHOOD CHURCH,
Southgate Road, N.1.

Thursday, December 3rd. A. KOHN.

Subject—

"Socialism and the World Revolution."

Thursday, December 10th. D. RUSSELL.

Subject—

"Rationalisation in Industry."

Chair taken at 7.45 p.m.

Admission Free.
Questions and Discussion.

Commence 8 p.m.
All invited.

ARE WE WRONG ABOUT CAPITALIST CRISES?

A correspondent ("Robbo," Croydon) has been digging into year-old articles published in the Socialist Standard, and wants to know if we have changed our mind about capitalism's crises. He writes as follows:—

In spite of your evident contempt for the "doctrine of collapse," I think there is at least an outside chance (notice, I do not say a certainty) of a breakdown, before we have time to make the Socialists. In this connection I have been studying the article, "Will Capitalism Collapse?", in your April, 1927, issue. There you refer to a previous criticism (February, 1922) of the same doctrine, pointing out that "half the allotted time" had passed, and that all the essential signs of a collapse were lacking. May I now point out that the "other half" has passed, and although, to be quite fair to you, the actual collapse has not yet taken place, it is significant to notice that almost all the features which you postulated as acceptable indications of collapse, and which may have been lacking in April, 1927, are now present in overwhelming force.

For instance (front page), "Where, now, are the unemployed organisations?" May I suggest, very much in evidence. Again (page 114), "Barring the failure of the natural physical basis of human life, it (the capitalist system) cannot fall," and (also page 114), "The system does not cease to function." Again I suggest that these things are happening. The physical basis is failing, and the system has almost ceased to function. Also (page 115) you say, "Since 1921 unemployment . . . has been almost halved, currency problems . . . have been . . . satisfactorily solved, and no one now supposes that the war debts present any special difficulty." In the light of present conditions, comment on the latter statements is surely superfluous, and a re-reading of your own article should give you "furiously to think."

REPLY.

The late Mr. Bonar Law once retorted to a political opponent who had been making wild prophecies about the effects of a certain policy, "It is no use trying to argue with a prophet: one can only disbelieve him." Fortunately one can do more than Mr. Bonar Law was disposed to do in that case. One can ask the prophet to state the grounds of his belief. For the benefit of other readers we must first explain the references made by our correspondent to earlier articles in this Journal. In 1921 and 1922 the Communists were busy preparing for the breakdown of capitalism which they believed to be imminent. One of them said in reply to a question that 10 years would prove or disprove the soundness of that theory, on which the whole

Communist movement was built up. In February, 1922, and again in April, 1927, articles by the present writer appeared in these columns criticising the assumptions of those who founded their policy on the supposed collapse of capitalism. In April, 1927, attention was drawn to the fact that half of the allotted ten years had passed, without the promised collapse and the world revolution which was to accompany it. What our correspondent "Robbo" asks us to believe is that even if the Communists misjudged the situation in 1922 and 1927 they have not over-estimated its seriousness to-day, because factors then lacking are now present. Let us consider these factors one by one.

In 1921 and 1922 the organised unemployed who were trying to force concessions from the Guardians and the Government by means of demonstrations, deputations, and the seizing of public buildings, were said to number hundreds of thousands, and the Communists claimed that they had the leadership of them. By 1927, with the passing of the worst of the industrial depression, the unemployed organisations had simply melted away; hence the remark, "Where now are the Unemployed organisations?" Our correspondent replies that in 1931 "they are very much in evidence." But he quite mistakes the point of the remark to which he refers. The intention was to show the uselessness of the Communist theory of so-called "mass organisation." Instead of building up a party of Socialists understanding Socialism, they believed in building up a loose organisation of vaguely discontented workers. Our criticism was that no permanent organisation could be constructed on such a base, and that anyway it could not be used for the achievement of Socialism because the members did not understand Socialism. We were right. Apathy and a decline in the volume of unemployment destroyed the unemployed organisations and robbed the Communist Party of the bulk of its own members. The same thing will happen again. Our correspondent must not imagine that we believe the capitalist system to be in danger from the activities of organised unemployed even if they do number hundreds of thousands. The capitalist class can always deal with such situations by the joint method of police action and the giving of more unemployment pay and

other concessions. The Communists themselves were compelled to admit that this is so. Their official organ said in 1923:—

The unemployed have done all they can, and the Government know it. They have tramped through the rain in endless processions. They have gone in mass deputations to the Guardians. They have attended innumerable meetings and have been told to be "solid." They have marched to London, enduring terrible hardships. . . . All this has led nowhere. None of the marchers believe that seeing Bonar Law in the flesh will make any difference. Willing for any sacrifice, there seems no outlet, no next step. In weariness and bitter disillusionment the unemployed movement is turning in upon itself. There is sporadic action, local rioting, but not central direction. The Government has signified its exact appreciation of the confusion by arresting Hannington.

The plain truth is that the unemployed can only be organised for agitation, not for action. Effective action is the job of the working-class as a whole. The Government is not afraid of starving men so long as the mass of the workers look on and keep the ring. ("Workers' Weekly," February 10th, 1923.)

The next point is the conditions under which capitalism might come to an end. The passage referred to is as follows (S.S., April 1927, p. 114).

Capitalism might conceivably be rent asunder and destroyed in a long-drawn-out struggle for mastery between contending classes, but, barring the failure of the natural physical basis of human life, it cannot fall and cannot be revolutionised except by the actions of the men and women who compose it.

To this our correspondent retorts, "The physical basis is failing, and the system has almost ceased to function." (*Italics his.*)

This statement is amazing, and our correspondent should himself have recognised the need for evidence to justify something so utterly out of keeping with the obvious facts of the present situation. The physical bases of human life—food, clothing, and shelter—were never so plentiful and so easily produced as they are to-day. The world is overburdened with supplies and the means of producing more of them. Yet in face of that our correspondent says that "The physical basis is failing." Like the late Mr. Bonar Law one can only disbelieve him.

Then we are told that the system has "almost" ceased to function. There must be much virtue in that "almost" in the eyes of our critic. The production and distribution of wealth goes on with no more difficulty than it did 10, 20, or 50 years ago. The number of workers actually in employment now is more than 1,000,000

above the level in the 1921 slump. In many respects the capitalists are now better informed and better able to make adjustments to the constant demands of their system than in the past. As regards the political side we have just seen the capitalists get a new mandate for the retention of capitalism in spite of all the causes now operating to make the workers discontented. Perhaps "Robbo" will enlighten us as to what he means by "almost ceased to function."

The last passage referred to by our correspondent is the following:—(S.S., April, 1927, p. 115.)

Again, allowance should have been made for the familiar recurring depression which is a century old feature of the system. Such a depression, affecting almost all the world in 1921, no more justified the prophecy of ruin and collapse for British capitalism than depression did in pre-war days. Since 1921 unemployment in this country has been almost halved, currency problems in most European countries have been from a capitalist standpoint satisfactorily solved and no one now supposes that the war debts present any special difficulty.

Our correspondent says about this, "In the light of present conditions, comment on the latter statements is surely superfluous, and a re-reading of your own article should give you furiously to think."

But comment is not superfluous, it is just what is needed, and in its absence we are left wondering what is our correspondent's point. Between 1921 and 1927 unemployment fell from 2,500,000 to about 1,250,000, and now with a larger insured population it is back to about the same percentage as in 1921. But what does that signify to our correspondent? To us it signifies that capitalism is behaving in very much the same way as in all the crises of the past. As regards currency problems our correspondent need only refer to contemporary political and economic journals to find that in the years just after the war the currency muddles of the European countries were far more disturbing than anything the world can show to-day. This country has now returned more or less to the currency position it occupied in the years from 1918 to 1925. Does that portend collapse? Obviously not. And has our correspondent forgotten that several times during the 19th century financial crises forced British Governments to suspend the Bank Charter Act governing the gold backing for the Bank of England Note issue?

If "Robbo" believes that the war debts do present some "special difficulty," all he has to do is to tell us what feature there is in the present crisis that cannot be paralleled in one or other of the pre-war crises, when war debts did not exist in amounts comparable with the present debts. We can see no such additional feature. What we can see is the German capitalists using the depression as an excuse for getting rid of their burden of reparations. They have also used reparations as their excuse for reducing the pay of Government employees. But our correspondent has only to look at the other countries to see that reparations are a convenient excuse, nothing more, for the British Labour Government and practically every Government in the world has used the fall in prices and the depression as an excuse for reducing civil service pay. Wage reductions were of course a feature of every pre-war depression also.

In conclusion it may be of interest to point out that the idea of the imminent and certain collapse of capitalism, with its fatal effect on serious Socialist study and organisation, is far older than the Communists, who are indeed only carrying on the theories and tactics of the reformists in the Social Democratic Federation. In the 'eighties and 'nineties of last century unemployed organisations, demonstrations, deputations to the Guardians demanding "work or maintenance," conflicts with the police, the seizing of public buildings, all of these things were in full blast whenever unemployment became acute. And then, as now, the reformists thought that capitalism would collapse and that the discontented non-Socialists in the unemployed organisations could be led to establish Socialism. And then, as now, there were the half-educated so-called "intellectuals," who had misread Marx, assuring the workers that this theory is Marxian, and that it is true although it fails to fit the facts. The late Mr. Hyndman had perhaps some excuse in 1884 for holding this unsound theory of the collapse of capitalism. He wrote in "Justice," in January, 1884:—

It is quite possible that during this very crisis, which promises to be long and serious, an attempt will be made to substitute collective for capitalist control. Ideas move fast; the workers are coming together.

Later on he suggested 1889 as the probable date for the revolution. (See "Rise

and Decline of Socialism," by Joseph Clayton, p. 14.)

Edward Carpenter, in "My Days and Dreams," says:—

It was no wonder that Hyndman, becoming conscious as early as 1881 of the new forces all around in the social world, was filled with a kind of fervour of revolutionary anticipation. We used to chaff him because at every crisis in the industrial situation he was confident that the millennium was at hand. . . .

Hyndman continued to see the revolution "round every corner" until the date of his death, although, ironically enough he bitterly hated the Communists who are only carrying on in Hyndman's own earlier tradition.

His successors in the I.L.P. and the Communist Party have no such excuse as Hyndman had. They have no excuse for their ignorant assumption that Marx supports their view, nor for their failure to acquaint themselves with the easily accessible facts of past experience and the theories Marx based upon them, which show how capitalist society actually works, and how it may be replaced when, and only when, the workers want Socialism and will organise politically to obtain it.

H.

HULL.

An INDOOR MEETING will be held in
ALEXANDRA ROOM, THE METROPOLE,

ON

Sunday, December 6th. Speaker—ERIC BODEN.

Subject—

"The General Election and—After."

Chairman—D. BILLANY.

Admission free. Non-members invited. Questions and Discussion. Commence 7.30 p.m.

SHEFFIELD

A PUBLIC MEETING will be held at the
TRADES HALL (ROOM 6)
CHARLES STREET

On

Wednesday, Dec. 23rd . . . Speaker—J. HORNER

Subject

"Trade Unions and the Socialist Party"

Admission free. Non-members invited. Questions and Discussion. Commence 7.30 p.m.

OFFICIAL NOTICE.

All communications for the Executive Committee, Subscriptions for the SOCIALIST STANDARD, Articles, and Correspondence submitted for insertion therein, should be addressed—The Socialist Party of Great Britain, 42, Great Dover Street, London, S.E.1, to whom Money Orders should be made payable.

The meetings of the Executive Committee are held at the Head Office, every Tuesday, at 7.30 p.m.

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The Socialist Standard,

DEC.,



1931

FUTILITIES & TRAGEDIES.

Each year that passes brings out with greater clearness the contrast between the professions of the League of Nations and its accomplishments. Organised for the avowed purpose of solving international tangles by arbitration, and thus doing away with the recourse to force, every dispute it has set out to settle has demonstrated its utter ineptitude.

The latest manifestation of the League must be food for infinite laughter to all who have a sense of humour. The League holds numerous and heated meetings; its delegates sit day and sometimes till late at night; first-class diplomats from all nations represented make hurried trips in aeroplanes to its meetings; frenzied notes are sent out to Japan and China to cease fighting and arbitrate. And the result?—Japan goes marching on to protect the £200 millions her capitalists have invested in Manchuria.

The central fact is the permanent condition of capitalism. Where a group of capitalists are aiming at markets for their goods they are always prepared to use force to accomplish their object if cunning is not sufficient, and if they believe they can safely do so. The only deterrent factor is the fear of superior force. The permanency of force should have been made sufficiently clear by the abortive disarmament conferences and

the way in which Germany, when restricted in the size of ships and weight of armour, succeeded in producing in smaller form as destructive ships of war as formerly.

The final and most effective reason for the maintaining of an armed force by each capitalist State is the enemy within its gates—the working class—who, at times when the burden of poverty and oppression becomes too much to be borne in silence and weakness, tends to revolt blindly and fiercely, and threaten the foundations of capitalist wealth. Although blind revolt cannot build a new society, it could damage or even destroy an existing one.

The amount of money willingly spent by various nations on the futile and fatuous work of the League of Nations is in striking contrast to the niggardliness of the expenditure on inside matters that affect the life and welfare of their workers. In factories and mines, and elsewhere, thousands of workers lose their lives every year in the work of piling up wealth for the capitalist. When an event occurs that is outstanding and cannot be conveniently ignored, the papers are full of tales of the heroism of workers and the cheap sympathy of those who profit by the workers' toil. One such event has occurred in England this week. At the Doncaster Colliery thirty-four miners have been killed and many injured in a disaster that has been a common feature of the mining industry.

Yet these very miners have been fighting for years against reductions in their already meagre wages, and in the forefront of the sympathisers are those who use the powers of Parliament to force down the miners' standard of living. Once again it has been shown that coal mining is an exceedingly dangerous occupation, but when the trouble has blown over this fact will be forgotten and all attention centred on the "League of Nations" and similar futilities.

THE WORKERS' SOCIALIST PARTY (U.S.A.).

Readers in the U.S.A. are invited to communicate with the Workers' Socialist Party of the United States, at 132, East 23rd Street, New York City (Room 7).

The Workers' Socialist Party are our agents in the U.S.A., and the "SOCIALIST STANDARD" is obtainable from them at the above address.

"THE HOUSE OF INDUSTRY."

by S. G. Hobson (Pub. P. S. King & Son, Ltd., price 1/-, 112 pages).

Mr. S. G. Hobson, who has in turn been a member of the I.L.P., a Fabian, and an advocate of Guild "Socialism," has written a book in which he advocates workers' control. This is to become effective by superseding the House of Lords by a "House of Industry," which will have full legal authority from the House of Commons to control "all industrial processes, including banking, finance, credit and insurance; and in which labour will have a permanent majority." The members of the "House of Industry" are to be elected by economic groups and to be representative of all factors. Needless to say Mr. Hobson does not propose dispossessing the capitalist class. He proposes that shares should be changed into "some form of debentures" bearing a fixed rate of interest.

The problems of Capitalism are very simple matters to the "House of Industry." Unemployment will be solved by "increasing wages, adjusting economic factors, by co-ordinating industry and controlling credit." How it is going to be done or how the details will work themselves out we are not told. We are left to believe that the magical formulæ, "Control of credit" . . . "finance" . . . "co-ordination of industry," etc., etc., which are repeated almost on every page, will perform the miracle.

The most interesting part of the book is perhaps the foreword contributed by two prominent Trades Council officials, A. M. Wall and A. A. Purcell. Concerned because the Labour Party has forsaken its policy of Nationalisation (see June S.S.) in favour of Public Utility Companies, they advocate support of Mr. Hobson's proposals for "workers' control" through a "House of Industry" as outlined in his book.

"The politicians," they say, "are actively engaged at this moment in legislating away their control over industry . . . We need only instance the creation of the Electricity Commission and the proposed new authority for the passenger transport system of London as illustrations of this tendency on the part of Parliament to give away its control of economic affairs."

They continue:—

The indications are that a decade of legislation under Labour Governments will give us a whole group of independent corporations of this type, administering railway and road transport, electricity supply, the cotton textile industry, and probably others. These concerns will not be, as the Post Office organisation is, under Parliamentary control, administered by Government departments, and with responsible Ministers at their head. If the proposed new transport authority in London is to be taken as a model, questions of wages and conditions of employment will be handled by these new bodies in exactly the same way as any powerfully organised capitalist-controlled industry handles them now. Trade Unions will negotiate with these boards of Commissioners as they now negotiate with employers' organisations; and the policy of the board in dealing with the Unions cannot be any more effectively challenged in Parliament than the policy of any capitalist organisation of employers can be challenged to-day. Labour members who are returned to the House of Commons at the expense of the Unions by working-class votes as Members of Parliament, will be as powerless to protect the interests of their organisations whose members are employed under these corporations, as the group of miners' M.P.s are to protect the workers in the coalfields under capitalist ownership. Our Labour members, in fact, who are consenting to the creation of these corporations, are not only voting away their usefulness as Union watchdogs: they are legislating against the workers' control of industry. And if anybody alleges that the principle of workers' control will be safeguarded by the inclusion of one or two prominent trade unionists among the commissioners we can only say we do not agree. We take leave to say further that anybody who thinks the appointment of a Trade Union representative on one of these boards is a step towards workers' control understands neither the meaning of workers' control nor the purpose of Trade Unionism.

It will be seen that Mr. A. M. Wall and Mr. A. A. Purcell both vigorously denounce Mr. Morrison's and the late Labour Government's London Passenger Transport Bill. They represent it—quite truly—as the abandonment of the Labour Party's old policy of Nationalisation. But is there any fundamental difference between these proposals? The difference is merely one of form. In the case of Nationalisation control is vested in a State Department; in the case of the Public Utility Trust in a Committee of business men who are responsible to a State Department. In the case of "workers' control," on the lines of Mr. Hobson's proposals, control would nominally be in the hands of elected officials. In each case, however, the capitalists still retain ownership, and perhaps more securely than ever. Instead of their shares

being liable to considerable fluctuations in the open market and to possible complete loss, they are to receive a fixed rate of interest on bonds having Government backing.

Public ownership in any of these forms is capitalism in a new garb. The defect about these schemes is that they do not so much as touch the fundamental problem of the workers. What is the problem? It is that we live in a world where the means of production and distribution are the private property of the capitalist class. The workers produce everything that is necessary for the sustenance and continuance of society; the capitalist class own it. The workers receive wages based roughly on what it costs them to live and be efficient, and bring up families. The capitalist class keep the remainder. It has been calculated by a Liberal economist, Professor Henry Clay, that one-twentieth of the population own between them five-sixths of the accumulated property, land, buildings, shares, etc., and retain every year nearly half of the total product of industry. That is the workers' problem. That is why they are poor. There lies the cause of unemployment and wars. The solution is that the means of production and distribution should be made the common property of society as a whole. When that has been done there will no longer be a working class, producing wealth but not owning it, and a propertied class owning wealth but not producing it. That will be Socialism. Nationalisation, Public Utility Companies, etc., do not solve that problem. They leave the property owners still in possession of their property rights, still able to live at the expense of the producers.

The only difference is that they exchange shares in a private company for shares in a public utility company, or for Government securities. The workers are more or less where they were before, getting just enough to exist on, and faced with all the harrowing problems of how to make ends meet. Changing the form of capitalism from private companies to State-controlled concerns is a problem of interest to the capitalist class, the form of whose property is being changed, but it is not a question that is worth the attention of the workers.

H. W.

Contributions are earnestly invited to assist us with the expense of publishing literature.

PILLARS OF THE STATE, OR WE ALL GO THE SAME WAY HOME.

During the great fight to secure seats in the House of Commons, the superficial observer might have been misled into thinking that a tremendous gulf separated the rival factions. Upon closer examination the differences are seen to be of quite minor proportions and mainly concerning details, but there exists a curious unanimity of purpose. Whilst the National crowd claim to have a monopoly of patriotism and national interests, and predicted dire results in the event of a Labour Government being returned, this was hotly disputed by the Labour Party, who themselves claim to be just as patriotic and considerate of National Interests as their opponents.

The victory rested with those who had the most megaphones, and made the strongest appeal to working-class political inexperience.

The Church (of course) was on the side of Sanity, and the Bishop of London (a follower of the Prince of Peace, who urged the workers to shed their blood in the masters' interests in the shambles of 1914 to 1918) again did his little bit for his masters when addressing his Diocesan Conference, predicting as a "solemn truth" that "If the verdict of the country goes wrong the pound will fall to five shillings in twenty-four hours, one shilling within a week, and one penny in a month." Note the dogmatic exactness with which he prophesies the decline.

Cardinal Bourne, whilst differing from the Bishop of London on questions of Theology is on the same side when it comes to a question of serving the masters' interests. Speaking at a meeting at the Victoria Palace, London, he said,

It was the duty of Catholics to promote national peace, and most of them rejoiced that for the time being there was a weakening in the country of that rigid adherence to a party which had been the cause of so many evils in the past. It was part of their duty to exorcise all that was evil in party spirit, and make its service as much as possible for the good of the nation. They had also to work for social peace. Nothing in the nature of class war might be fostered or encouraged by Catholics. ("Eccles Journal," October 30th.)

Dear, dear! Whether they were really perturbed at the possibility of the return of a Labour Government we don't know; but they needn't have been alarmed.

Let us call the spokesmen of the Labour Party to give evidence against themselves. In an interview with the "Manchester Evening Chronicle" (Oct. 28-31), Mr. Clynes said, "My conviction is that the Labour Party has stood as the most effective bulwark between revolution and a deep underlying discontent with economic and industrial conditions. The destruction for the time being of the Parliamentary Labour Party may well release forces for dissatisfaction which may assume the most ugly forms in the absence of the political power which the Labour Party welded." While Mr. Henderson in the "Daily Herald" (Oct. 29-31) referred to "Labour as the only bulwark against reaction and revolution."

These are not merely individual views but are representative of the official party attitude as is shown by the "Daily Herald" leader (Oct. 30th), "The Labour Party in Opposition, as in office, will do its duty to the Nation. The Government's proposals will be carefully considered and judged purely and simply on their merits. Where they are considered to be wise, just, and designed for the advantage of the Nation they will be cordially approved, and every aid will be given in carrying them out."

The term "National Interests" is generally construed as meaning the interests of the whole of the people. Let us see. In society as at present constituted there is a class which owns the means of wealth production and distribution, and draw their incomes simply because of this ownership.

On the other hand there is another class which constitutes the majority, who, because of the fact that they do not own the means of wealth production are compelled to work for those who do, on terms dictated by the owners. Between these two classes there is a diametrical opposition of interests, so that there can exist no national interests in the generally understood sense. National interests, upon examination, are found to be ruling class interests, and all parties standing for national interests are obviously supporters of the existing order no matter what labels they impudently give themselves. To quote the "Daily Herald" again (Nov. 3rd), while claiming that their object is Socialism, they define it as "a commonsense plan for the rationalisation of the system in which we live."

The Socialist Party of Great Britain re-

presents the interests of the working class, as opposed to the interests of the capitalist class, and does not pander to popular prejudice in order to secure seats in Parliament, or to get a following. Its constant aim is to get the workers to realise the necessity of a revolutionary change in the basis of Society and ending the present "system in which we live."

The Labour Party is lined up along with the Liberals and Tories in defence of capitalism, and is an obstruction in the path of the workers in their struggle for emancipation; an obstruction to be kicked out of the way. The I.L.P. members in a belated attempt to justify their title have decided not to sit with the Labour members on the grounds that: "Our experience with the Labour Party and the Labour Movement in recent years, has been such that we cannot possibly put our political actions under their control until we have some evidence that there is a general return to Socialist principles." ("Daily Herald," Nov. 4th). It would be interesting to know what were the Socialist principles once held by the Labour Party, and at what date Maxton's peculiar crowd think they deserted them.

The I.L.P.s claim to be Socialist is just as impertinent as that of the Labour Party, and its principal achievement is that it gave to the Labour Party, Ramsay MacDonald and Philip Snowden.

Out of the election results, one thing is made evident. If, in the event of another war, the workers are stampeded into support of it, the Labour leaders will again do their bit for their masters as recruiting sergeants.

Fellow-workers, why dally longer with these cheap-jack vendors of political shoddy; with reforms that do not reform; with palliatives that do not palliate? Why support parties that are bulwarks of the present system when that system can only exist by keeping you in a subject position? Why follow leaders who are hoping to receive decorations from the enemy for services rendered—to the enemy?

The three "traitors" are no more and no less subservient to capitalism than the present leader has in the past proved himself to be. Organise along with us in the Socialist Party for the purpose of establishing Socialism, and leave these leaders without a following, when they can no longer be a danger to you nor useful to the capitalist class.

J. L.

OVERPRODUCTION BAFFLES THE CAPITALISTS.

"The Times," on September 5th, had an editorial on the present world economic situation that was strangely frank and illuminating, as the following extracts will show:—

How disastrously the financial machinery of the world is out of gear was strikingly illustrated the other day, when, in order to effect an exchange of commodities, the Brazilian Government and the Federal Farm Board of the United States had to resort to the primitive method of direct barter. They signed an agreement exchanging 1,050,000 bags of coffee for 25,000,000 bushels of wheat. That method of meeting the situation is, at any rate, better than some of those which have been adopted. In Texas and Oklahoma the military took charge of the oil wells, not to prevent any interference with production, but to stop production, and in Kansas orders were given to stop production in specified areas. . . .

The cotton growers of the Southern States were recently urged by the Federal Farm Board to destroy one-third of their crops, and, though they indignantly rejected this suggestion, they themselves are seriously considering proposals to prohibit the growing, gathering or ginning of cotton next year. In Brazil hundreds of thousands of bags of coffee have been bought and destroyed by the Coffee States Council. . . .

Every one knows that there is over-production in the sense that there is more cotton, more wheat, more sugar, more coffee, and, apparently, more of every kind of food and raw material on the market than the consumer is able to buy at prices remunerative to the grower. . . .

Over-production is hard to imagine in the sense that more wheat, for example, is being grown than the world can use. At any rate it cannot be said to exist so long as there are people who cannot get enough bread to eat. . . .

Half a dozen professors of political economy, discussing the practical questions on which their studies should enable them to throw light, can disagree among themselves as wholeheartedly as any half a dozen business men in a railway carriage. But somehow or other, with or without the aid of the scientific economist, answers will have to be found for the economic riddles over which the world is now bewildered. Until they are solved, or, perhaps, solve themselves, there can be no general return to prosperity.

Detailed comment would spoil this picture.

Too much of everything, but we are poor because we can't buy! America can't sell so she takes to barter. The owners in the producing industries have taken fright and are destroying or restricting production. The sum total of opinion in Tory, Liberal, Labour and T.U.C. camps is that the only way out for this country is a general cut

in wages or an increase in prices—a reduction in buying power! Under it all is the hope, frankly expressed above, that somehow or other things will straighten themselves out.

The capitalists, their guides and scribes, are impotent in the face of productive machinery so prolific that the wealth turned out is clogging and weighing the system down. The only real answer they have is to find a means, satisfactory to the bulk of their class, for restricting production and parcelling out markets.

GILMAC.

HEAD OFFICE.

The following Meetings will be held on Sunday Evenings at 42, Gt. Dover Street, S.E. 1:

Sunday, 6th December E. LAKE
"Socialism and Disarmament"

Sunday, 13th December A. SMITH
"What is Socialism"

Sunday, 20th December D. GOLDBERG
"Socialism and the Co-operative Movement."

Sunday, 27th December
Speaker and Subject to be announced in the Press.

Admission free. Non-members invited. Commence 8 p.m. Questions and Discussion.

SHOREDITCH.

Will sympathisers in the district, willing to co-operate in forming a Branch at Shoreditch, please communicate with W. Reynolds, 57, Weymouth Terrace, Hackney Road.

STEPNEY.

The recently formed Stepney Branch meets on Fridays at 8 p.m., at the Whitechapel Library, Whitechapel Road. Communications to W. Mays, 99, Oxford Road, E. 1.

EDINBURGH.

Members and sympathisers in Edinburgh who are willing to co-operate in running study classes during the winter months, are asked to communicate with D. Lamond, at 15, Barclay Place.

THE SOCIALIST FORUM.

OURSELVES AND THE RUSSIAN FIVE-YEAR PLAN.

Mr. W. Langham (W. Ealing) writes as follows:—

You often condemn the Russian Five Year Plan as not being Socialism, and being apparently a wrong method of attaining Socialism, but according to the ideas of the S.P.G.B. Socialism *must* come through Capitalism, it could not come through any other economic system, and as Russia under the Czars had been kept industrially backward for many years, it follows that the Five Year Plan is a necessary step towards Socialism. At least State Capitalism will make the change over much easier than from the Individualistic Capitalism which exists in other European countries.

You also condemn the I.L.P. for advocating Nationalisation, but this if brought about would tend to put the whole control of industry into the hands of Parliament, and production and distribution would at last become subject to the direct will of the people. Surely the fact that such services as the Post Office being of no advantage to the workers at present, only proves the necessity for taking over all services of production and distribution, and not make one pay for the inefficiency of private enterprise. It seems to me that this must be the way Socialism will at last come.

REPLY.

Our correspondent is in error. We do not "condemn the Russian Five-Year Plan"; what we do is to condemn the Communists here and in Russia for propagating the falsehood that it is Socialism.

The further question about the technical development of Russia is answered by the condition of things in Great Britain, Germany, the U.S.A. and elsewhere. It is true, as Marx pointed out, that a country cannot jump from a backward, pre-capitalist, stage of development straight into Socialism; and we condemned the Bolsheviks for attempting to do this. But it is also true that something more than mere industrial efficiency is required in order to establish Socialism. Otherwise we would have had Socialism in the advanced capitalist countries decades ago.

State capitalism may, in certain circumstances, bring about the development of industry more rapidly than if it were left to private capitalist enterprise. It is, however, useful to remember that State capitalism has been little resorted to in the U.S.A.—a country which the Bolsheviks are taking as their model for industrial efficiency. There are, too, many observers who doubt whether State capitalism in Russia has

achieved this end more quickly or more efficiently than would have been the case if private capitalism had been given greater freedom.

The more important point is, however, the argument that State capitalism "will make the change-over much easier." It is an old argument, but is there any foundation for it? Germany and Australia are two countries in which vast experiments in State capitalism have been tried out over a long period. Have they in consequence made greater strides towards Socialism? We know of no evidence whatever to that effect. We challenge our correspondent to prove this assertion.

May we also point out that the question of nationalising industries is one which the capitalists themselves will continue to decide so long as they remain in power, and they will decide it in their interests, not in ours. During the past ten years the process all over Europe has been in the direction of handing over State capitalist concerns to private corporations. Almost the first action of the late "Labour" Government was to ratify the agreement transferring State cables and wireless services to Imperial and International Communications, Ltd.

We certainly do condemn the I.L.P. for pretending that nationalisation and public utility corporations are Socialism, or are steps to Socialism; and our correspondent admits that we are justified in so doing, when he confesses that State ownership as in the Post Office is "of no advantage to the workers at present." Socialism can only come when the workers have become Socialists. The I.L.P. and the Labour Party have made the work of propagating Socialism infinitely harder by pointing to nationalised industries as instances of Socialism. The worker who believes the Post Office to be a Socialist institution and who observes, like our correspondent, that it is "of no advantage to the workers," quite naturally looks without enthusiasm at Socialist propaganda. Before we can get the workers to listen to our propaganda for Socialism, we have to undo the harm wrought by the I.L.P. and Labour Party.

To talk about putting industry under the "direct will of the people" by nationalising it is absurd. Is the Post Office under the direct will of the people? It is one of the most bureaucratic and hidebound bodies in existence. The unfortunate postman is

hedged about with ancient and stupid regulations which most private capitalists have abandoned long ago. He may not even unfasten his collar in a heat wave! Is this the will of the people?

Parliament is the dominating factor in the situation for all industries, not only nationalised ones. When the workers determine to do so they can control Parliament and, consequently, control the whole situation. The need is to get the workers to have the will to establish Socialism, not to interest them in minor questions about the form of capitalist control. Converting the workers to Socialism is still in its infancy in Russia as in other countries.

ED. COMM.

* * *

WAR AND THE COLLAPSE OF CAPITALISM.

A correspondent objects to our statement made in the September issue that it is a hoary fallacy to suppose that capitalism will collapse of its own accord. He asks, "How is it possible for it to survive another world war? And under capitalism another war seems inevitable. Such a war would smash past repair the financial systems of Europe."

To this question we would reply by asking another: "How was it possible for capitalism to survive the last war?" It is certainly true that capitalism did survive it, in spite of the hysterical prophecies of the believers in that hoary fallacy that it would collapse "past repair."

What our correspondent overlooks is that no matter how great the damage a war might cause to parts of the capitalist system, the survivors of the war, *unless they are Socialists*, will turn to and build it up again. There is no way of getting Socialism without Socialists.

ED. COMM.

* * *

A QUESTION ON GOLD AND PROSPERITY.

Editor of SOCIALIST STANDARD.

Sir,—Your notion that the relation between gold and trade depression is "an illusion," and that it can be "easily dispelled" is erroneous. The relation is not, as you seem to imagine, such that the stock held by individual countries can secure their prosperity in face of world depression. The relation is between the rate of increase of the world's stock of gold as against that of other primary products, and the statistics for the period 1850-1913 show that when this relative gold supply was increasing primary prices rose, and that when

it decreased their prices fell—*vide* the figures and chart of Professor Cassel and Mr. Kitchen republished in the first interim report of the Gold Delegation of the League of Nations. The ill effects of a downward trend of prices upon industry and employment are well established, and the relation between gold and trade depression is now only disputed by those who are concerned to maintain a deflationary policy, or who are ignorant of Professor Cassel's work.

GEOFFREY BIDDULPH.

Church Street, S.W.7.
October 18th, 1931.

Mr. Biddulph "corrects" a notion which we do not hold. That he attributes it to us can only be due to careless reading of the article in question. We made it quite clear that we were concerned (as indeed, we always are) with the main problem of the workers, not with the problems of different sections of the capitalist class.

The difference between Mr. Biddulph and ourselves can be illustrated from his notion that rising prices, due to an increasing supply of gold, mean prosperity. We do not deny that prosperity may come to the manufacturing and trading capitalists: but what of the workers?

The table to which Mr. Biddulph refers us, and from which we have ourselves quoted recently, shows a very great increase in the world supply of gold from 1890 to 1914. Do we, then, find the workers prosperous? In 1901 Mr. Seeborn Rowntree found a third of the workers below a very meagre level of existence which he called the poverty line. In 1903 Sir Henry Campbell-Bannerman endorsed Rowntree's findings and declared that "about 30 per cent. of the population is living in the grip of perpetual poverty." In 1904 Sir Leo Money (then Mr. Money) ascertained that 96 persons out of every 100 died owning less than £100, while the other 4 out of every 100 possessed an average of over £9,000 each. He found that about one-seventieth of the population owned far more than half of the entire wealth of the United Kingdom.

If this is what Mr. Biddulph means by prosperity—*i.e.*, prosperity for the few—we do not dispute it. But we repeat our statement that the main problems of the workers have nothing to do with the supply of gold.

ED. COMM.

PAMPHLETS FOR SALE.

Value, Price and Profit	..	Marx.	7d.
Wage—Labour and Capital	..	Marx.	5d.
Causes of Belief in God	..	Lafargue.	4d.

Post free.

RATIONALISING THE PETROL INDUSTRY.

Miners complain that petrol has helped to deprive them of their jobs. The developments of the petrol industry are at the same time reducing the number of workers required there. Many improvements in the distribution of petrol have been made since the War.

The substitution of the old horse-drawn wagons by motor-lorries has enabled the petrol companies to close down a large number of depots, involving the dismissal of drivers and vanguards in each case, as the motors can cover a larger area. Where depots have not been closed, a thorough revision of the vehicle routes has enabled lorries, drivers, and vanguards, to be dispensed with at nearly all depots.

The replacement of the petrol can by the petrol pump has resulted in the displacement of still more workers. Petrol can be run into a tank-wagon and out again into the retailer's underground storage much more quickly than when it was necessary to load the cans on to a lorry and then to unload at the retailer's, and then to load what empty cans had to be returned to the depot for unloading there. Then, of course, there was the filling of the empty cans at the depots, all of which took a considerable time. Vanguards were generally employed to assist in loading cans, but now they have largely been dispensed with, and the larger number of retailers who can be supplied by one tank-wagon has resulted in the elimination of further vehicles and drivers on this score. The large amount of labour involved in the manufacture and the periodical cleaning and painting of cans is no longer necessary. Motorists were induced to change over to pumps by quoting a lower price *ex* the pump.

Chiefly as a result of these changes in the method of delivery, in one firm alone 2,000 workers have been sacked during the past two years, and for the whole industry in the United Kingdom the number would probably be round about 6,000.

A casual inquirer might ask why, instead of dismissing so many workers, the hours could not have been shortened all round, or more holidays given, or, seeing that there is a like facility of production in the manufacture of cars and motor-cycles,

why society could not have provided them with motor-cycles or cans in order to use up the surplus petrol.

The capitalist form of society, however, knows of no such solution. Goods are not produced primarily for use, but in order to make a profit, and when competing capitalists bring down prices in order to undersell a competitor or to force their entry into a price combine, the others are bound to follow suit, in order to retain their profits, cut down the number of their workers to the absolute minimum, and if that is not sufficient, reduce wages.

Hence we see that, all round, increasing facility of production of foods and commodities of all kinds only means an increase in the poverty of the workers.

No modification of capitalism can alter this condition of affairs. The solution is to abolish capitalism. Capitalism is only one of the many forms of society which have evolved, and Socialism is its only logical successor. Only by the establishment of Socialism can the poverty of the workers be abolished. Read our Declaration of Principles and see how this can be brought about.

RAMO.

TO OUR READERS. PLEASE NOTE

The "Socialist Standard" can be obtained from the following Newsagents:—

LONDON.

G. P. Dean, 20, Victoria Avenue, East Ham.
F. White & Son, 295a, East India Dock Road, Poplar, E.
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BRANCH DIRECTORY.

BATTERSEA.—Sec., 2 Hanbury Road, S.W.11. Branch meets Thursday, 8.30 p.m. at The Waiting Room, Latchmere Baths, entrance in Burns Road. Discussion second Thursday in month.

BECONTREE.—Sec., Hy. Gratton, 4, Drummond Ave., Brooklands, Romford. Branch meets 1st and 3rd Wednesdays at 7.30, at above address.

BIRMINGHAM.—Sec., E. Jesper, 32, Rollason-rd., Erdington. Branch meets Hill Top Café, 197, Spring Hill, 1st Sunday in month at 11 a.m.

CENTRAL.—Membership obtained only through the Ex. Committee. Applications to General Sec.

EAST LONDON.—Sec. J. Strickett, 5, Ely Terrace, Mile End. Branch meets every Thursday, at 7.30 p.m., at Limehouse Library (Committee Room), Commercial Road, E. Lectures on alternate Thursdays. Public invited.

GLASGOW.—Branch meets 2nd and 4th Fridays in month 8 p.m., at 118, Howwood Street, Glasgow, S.1. Sec., A. Shaw.

HACKNEY.—Branch meets Arcadian Cafe, 42, Amherst Road, Hackney, 1st and 3rd Fridays in month, 8 p.m., Discussions 9.30. Communication to Sec. at 21 Bridge Street, Homerton, E. 9.

HULL.—Branch meets 1st and 3rd Wednesdays in month at 15, Grosvenor Street, Beverley Road. Communications to M. V. Coupland at above address.

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MANCHESTER.—Sec., D. White, 13, Sherdley Road, Higher Crumpsall, M/C. Branch meets 2nd and 4th Mondays in month.

PADDINGTON. Branch meeting held on alternate Wednesdays, 8 p.m., at 430 Harrow Road, W.9.

SHEFFIELD.—Branch meets 2nd and 4th Wednesdays 7.30 p.m., Room 5, Trades Hall, Charles Street. Public discussion after business. Secretary E. Boden, 74, Glenalmond Road.

SOUTHEND-ON-SEA.—Sec., J. Bird, 5, Wellington-avenue, Westcliffe-on-Sea.

SOUTHWARK.—Branch meets Fridays at 8 p.m., 42, Great Dover Street, S.E.1. Communications to Sec., at above address.

TOOTING.—Branch meets on alternate Wednesdays at "Labour Centre," 126, Upper Tooting Road. Secretary, W. MEHEW, 19, Littleton Street, S.W.18.

TOTTENHAM.—Sec., F. A. Hammond, 64, Stroud Green Rd., N.4. Branch meets 1st and 3rd Fridays each month, Room 2, Trades Hall, 7, Bruce Grove, Discussion after branch business. Public invited.

WALTHAMSTOW.—Sec. S. E. Williams, 64, Bloxhall-rd., Leyton, E.10. Branch meets at Workmen's Hall, High-st., 2nd and 4th Mondays each month.

WATFORD.—A. Lawson, Sec., 107, Kensington-avenue, Watford. Branch meets Mondays at 8.30 p.m. at Secretary's address.

WEST HAM.—Branch meets Thursdays at 8 p.m. at 167, Romford-rd., Stratford. Sec., P. Hallard, 22, Colegrave-rd., Stratford, E.

WOOD GREEN.—All communications to Sec., F. W. Godfrey, 26, Russell Road, Palmers Green, N. 13. Branch meets 2nd and 4th Wednesday in month at 8.30 p.m. at Stirling House, Stuart Crescent.

THE SOCIALIST PARTY OF GREAT BRITAIN,

OBJECT.—The establishment of a system of society based upon the common ownership and democratic control of the means and instruments for producing and distributing wealth by and in the interests of the whole community.

DECLARATION OF PRINCIPLES.

THE SOCIALIST PARTY of Great HOLDS— Britain

That society as at present constituted is based upon the ownership of the means of living (i.e., lands, factories, railways, etc.) by the capitalist or master class, and the consequent enslavement of the working class by whose labour alone wealth is produced.

That in society, therefore, there is an antagonism of interests, manifesting itself as a class struggle, between those who possess but do not produce and those who produce but do not possess.

That this antagonism can be abolished only by the emancipation of the working class from the domination of the master class, by the conversion into the common property of society of the means of production and distribution, and their democratic control by the whole people.

That as in the order of social evolution the working class is the last class to achieve its freedom, the emancipation of the working class will involve the emancipation of all mankind, without distinction of race or sex.

That this emancipation must be the work of the working class itself.

That as the machinery of government, including the armed forces of the nation, exists only to conserve the monopoly by the capitalist class of the wealth taken from the workers, the working class must organise consciously and politically for the conquest of the powers of government, national and local, in order that this machinery, including these forces, may be converted from an instrument of oppression into the agent of emancipation and the overthrow of privilege, aristocratic and plutocratic.

That as political parties are but the expression of class interests, and as the interest of the working class is diametrically opposed to the interests of all sections of the master class, the party seeking working-class emancipation must be hostile to every other party.

THE SOCIALIST PARTY of Great Britain, therefore, enters the field of political action determined to wage war against all other political parties, whether alleged labour or avowedly capitalist, and calls upon the members of the working class of this country to muster under its banner to the end that a speedy termination may be wrought to the system which deprives them of the fruits of their labour, and that poverty may give place to comfort, privilege to equality, and slavery to freedom.

Those agreeing with the above principles and desiring enrolment in the Party should apply for membership form to secretary of nearest branch or at Head Office.